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A WAYFARER IN HUNGARY

THE DAUGHTER OF A WEALTHY PEASANT FARMER GARBED AS A VESTAL VIRGIN

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A WAYFARER IN HUNGARY

BY

GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM

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WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS AND A MAP

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PREFACE

THIS is not a guide-book.

If it were, or professed to be, it would be an exceedingly bad guide-book, perhaps the worst ever written.

For a guide-book—the works of Baedeker are the perfect examples of this kind of literature—ought to be complete. No route by which any place can be reached should be unmentioned, no town left without description, no beautiful scene or eminent picture without its asterisk. This book is far short of completeness. And a guide-book—see Baedeker again—should be concise, its facts as carefully packed as the suit-case of the traveller who uses it. This book is discursive and rambling. Above all a guide-book should be impersonal. We do not want to know what Herr Baedeker himself thinks, or

thought, of any of the places he describes, any more than we want to know what Mr. Beeton thought of his dinner, or which of all the dishes his wife cooked with such consummate skill he really preferred. This is quite right. The business of a guide-book writer is to inform the traveller what, according to the established opinion of the best and wisest men, ought to be seen, not at all what he himself likes seeing.

The writing of a good guide-book must, I fancy, be the result of carefully organized collaboration. I do not believe that Herr Baedeker visited all the places described in his books or dined at every restaurant whose prices he names. The thing is impossible. He must have had fellow workers, correspondents, men who perhaps knew only one city but knew it intimately, experts in railway systems and skilled art critics; just as Mr. Whittaker must have specialists to help him in the production of his admirable almanack. No one human head could contain so much information of so varied a kind.

I have had no correspondents. Not to one single person have I sent out a list of questions with a courteous request for answers. I dare say my book would be better if I had; but I could not bear to do it. I know how I myself hate answering questions set out on forms, by Income Tax collectors, by my ecclesiastical superiors, and all the other people who suffer from a morbid hunger for facts. Nothing would induce me to add to the sorrow of others, as others far too often add to mine, by asking for information.

Indeed, while in Hungary I carefully avoided association with those who make a business of giving information to strangers. Never once did I seek an interview with any eminent man. In Hungary, just as in Ireland and I suppose in all small countries given to propaganda, there are people who delight to tell foreigners all the facts which they think foreigners ought to know. I never went near one of them. I prefer, when I want flowers, to pick them myself, culling the blooms which appeal to me, rather than

buy a ready-made bouquet at a florist's shop; although—I willingly admit this—the florist's bouquet looks better than mine. Besides, being an Irishman, I know all about the information given by "leading" men to inquiring strangers. I have heard it being given. I have watched the stranger absorbing it. I have read the amazing books he wrote afterwards; and that method of studying a country does not attract me.

I spent the greater part of two years in Hungary. I went there full of sympathetic curiosity. I remained full of curiosity, more or less sympathetic, till the end. Those are my only excuses for writing about Hungary at all.

I wanted to know about Hungary. Every Irishman must. Was it not a pamphlet called "The Resurrection of Hungary" which started our Sinn Féin movement? I can remember when that picturesque historical essay was appearing week by week in *The United Irishman*, when it took by storm the imagination of the youth of Ireland, when

those who accepted the "Parallel for Ireland" were nicknamed the "Green Hungarian Band." (At that time a popular association of musicians were known all over England as the "Blue Hungarian Band.") It was inevitable that I should want to know what the Hungarians were really like and how much of Mr. Arthur Griffith's pamphlet was actual history.

I had also read the works of "Scotus Viator," and had been struck with the resemblance of much in them to the things which sentimental Englishmen wrote about Ireland—the oppressed Gaelic peasantry, the wicked Protestant ascendancy, the cruel Government, and so forth. Having lived long among the oppressed Gaels, and also under the shadow of the Protestant ascendancy, and being familiar with all the other horrors described, I naturally thought, after reading about the poor Slavs and Rumanians in Croatia and Transylvania, that the Magyars must be pleasant and agreeable people. I wanted to know them.

There were other things, mere trifles, which piqued my curiosity. A line of Campbell's about "the fiery Hun" whose battle charger neighed furiously; a passage in one of Milton's prose works about Transylvanian students coming to Oxford; and the knowledge, acquired by some accident, that the Magyars are racially distinct from any other European people.

Yet I doubt if my curiosity would have impelled me to go to Hungary, much less to stay there as I did, if an opportunity cunningly disguised as a sort of duty, had not been flung at me. I was offered the post of chaplain to the British community in Budapest, with the understanding that my "parish" extended over the whole country. After scarcely a moment's hesitation I accepted the offer. In spite of the almost incredible difficulty of getting two rooms to live in, I have not regretted the time I spent there. Budapest is a very beautiful city. The country is agreeable. The people, whose history is a romance, are singularly interesting.

Books about post-war Hungary are few, and I have had little help from them. Most of those which exist are smeared with the tar of propaganda. The writers generally have a case to make and adopt the usual method of over-emphasizing what favours the desired conclusion and slurring what injures it. I hope I have not been guilty of either fault; but I may have been. I admire the Hungarians, and that may have led me to paint them liker to angels than they are. On the other hand, Hungarians have at times made me so furiously angry that I have said grossly insulting things of them and to them. Recollections of these hours of black passion may have led me to understate their virtues. Probably this book is as inconsistent as my own feelings—pro-Magyar one day, fiercely anti-Magyar the next.

Of the books on Hungary, post-war Hungary, known to me, there is one which I read with deep interest and real delight, *Quand Israel est Roi*, by Jérome and Jean Tharaud. I have quoted from it largely. I

owe more to it even than my numerous quotations. Perhaps this book may induce some readers to go from my pages to the far better informed, brilliantly written and deeply suggestive work of these two French gentlemen.

MELLS
1925

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A WAYFARER IN HUNGARY

CHAPTER I

HOW TO GET THERE

I HAVE been asked the way to Budapest so often that I am sure many people must want to know and that there is some difficulty in finding out. The obvious thing for an inquirer to do is to go to some tourist agency and put the question across the counter to the courteous clerk who attends to such matters. This plan works, and works admirably, if you want to go to Paris, Rome or even Vienna. The clerk knows all about all possible routes and sets them down neatly for you on a piece of paper. In the case of Budapest the plan works badly. For any other part of Hungary it does not work at all. Either our tourist agencies do not know how to get to Hungary or else they do not want tourists to go there.

I have myself been assured, more than once, that the only way of getting to Budapest is by the Orient Express. The information is of some value. You can go to Budapest by that train; but there are certain drawbacks. The Orient Express only

runs three days in the week. It costs more, a great deal more, than any other train. You must travel first class the whole way and you must have a sleeping berth in a *wagon-lits*. You pay more for your meals *en route* than you do in ordinary trains, and the cost of registered luggage, carried in the van, is enormous. Still, if you are prepared to spend money lavishly, you certainly can get to Budapest fairly comfortably and quickly by the Orient Express. The hour of your departure from Paris varies between 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. If the affairs of France and Germany are in a very critical condition, the Orient Express has to wander a long way round to avoid disturbed districts. Then it starts early. If Central European politics are fairly calm the train can leave Paris later and take a shorter route. In either case it arrives in Budapest at 7 a.m.

This is a detestable hour to arrive anywhere. I know few things more disagreeable than climbing stiffly out of a sleeping-car in the early morning gloom of the Keleti Station at Budapest. You stand in a pool of oily mud while your luggage is pushed out of the carriage window. You try to make out what the porters are talking about when you know no Hungarian and they know nothing else. After thirty-six or forty-five hours of railway travelling most of us are far too grimy, nerve-wracked and fussed to be capable of dealing with a difficult situation without loss of temper.

And, in spite of what the tourist agencies say, there are other ways of getting to Budapest. You

can go by Ostend, travel down the Rhine district, get to Vienna through Bavaria, and thence to Budapest. You can go to the Hook of Holland, thence to Berlin, and afterwards through Dresden and Prague. If you are very good at changing trains in the middle of the night, you can take a short cut through Leipsig, and get to Dresden that way. I know a man who struck out a route by Berne, Milan and Trieste, which he said was no slower and considerably cheaper than any other. I never tried this way myself, and on the map it looks an immense round.

The drawback to any of these routes, as compared with the Orient Express, is that you are harried by Custom House officers and passport people to an almost incredible extent. Travellers by the Orient Express get off very cheaply. For some reason they are not suspected of smuggling, so their luggage is scarcely looked at, and they are supposed to be so respectable that their passports are stamped without fuss, unless—often even if—some important visa is glaringly absent. A passenger by any other train is suspect. His luggage is examined as if each Custom House officer has private information that it is full of contraband goods. His passport is scrutinized with such minute care that he feels like a fugitive criminal and breathes a prayer of thankfulness each time he is not arrested.

If you are adventurous and do not mind taking trouble you can sometimes travel very cheaply by one of these routes. Instead of taking a through ticket, you book to the nearest frontier station,

from that to the next frontier, and so on, taking a fresh ticket for each country you go through. This is very troublesome, and you do not always save money by doing it, but sometimes you do—quite considerable sums. Everything depends on the condition of the various exchanges at the moment. If there has been a drop in the value of Austrian or Hungarian crowns, and if you happen to be travelling before the Government concerned has had time to readjust its railway fares, then you succeed in getting over one section of your journey at a very cheap rate. Of course if there has been a sudden rise in the worth of one of these currencies—but then there never is a rise, so it is not necessary to consider that contingency.

The condition of the various exchanges, if you are bent on saving money, will influence your choice of route. It may pay you to travel as much as possible in Germany, or in France, or in Austria, or even to go round through Italy. It may—and generally does—pay to avoid Czecho-Slovakia. On this subject no advice of permanent value can be given. The economical traveller must watch the exchanges for himself, keeping a careful eye on the activities of the various Governments. Even then it is a speculative business, and no one can be sure of saving money in this way. All that can be said in favour of the plan is that you cannot lose. The people who issue through tickets always keep themselves safe, and when you buy from them you know you are paying the maximum price.

Apart from the trouble of booking and re-booking,

often at most unseemly hours, the drawback to this sort of financial adventure is that you must have in your pocket a sufficient amount of the money in the currency of each country to pay for the ticket you want to buy there. There is no use offering an English pound to a booking clerk at Bodenbach. He will not take it. And the friend to whom he refers you will swindle you horribly over the rate of exchange. The thing to do is to plan out beforehand the countries you mean to go through and to supply yourself with a sufficiency of the money of each before leaving London. This is not easy to do. Sometimes it is not possible. Hungarian crowns, for instance, are often unobtainable in London or Paris. When you can get them you pay too much for them; that is to say, you get fewer of them for your pound sterling than if you made the exchange in Budapest—much fewer, perhaps twenty per cent. fewer. The reason for this disparity of rates is very complicated and would require a whole chapter to explain. But the fact is as I state it. The wise traveller will change no money till he gets to Hungary, and then as little as possible at a time.

By any of these routes you avoid the unpleasantness of arriving in Budapest at 7 a.m. Travelling by Ostend and Munich, you get there at 3 p.m., or are supposed to. Generally you do not, for that train makes a habit of being late—two hours late or four hours late. I once went to meet it when it was ten hours late. Going through Prague, you arrive at 11 a.m. And that train is fairly punctual.

From Trieste, if you have travelled through Italy, you get to Budapest about 6 p.m. In any case you are fagged, dirty and in no mood to enjoy your first glimpse of what is supposed to be the most beautiful capital in Europe.

The most comfortable and, in my opinion, by far the pleasantest thing to do is to finish the train part of the journey at Vienna, and from that take a steamer down the river to Budapest. This is, of course, slower. The steamer takes thirteen hours over the stage of its journey which the train does in about half the time. But it is incomparably more pleasant. The steamers are comfortable, the food on them is good. You are resting instead of being exhausted while you travel. You are breathing fresh air instead of poisonous gas mixed with coal dust. There is no possibility of being sea-sick, and you see a number of interesting things and beautiful places. Of these I shall say something a little later on for the benefit of those who are wise enough to travel this way. But before I do, it is only fair to mention a totally different theory about the proper way to get to Hungary.

"If the Hungarian Government were wise," so a friend of mine said to me one day in Budapest, "it would make a law that all strangers must enter the country by way of Constantinople and Belgrade."

We were discussing the complaints of an English tourist who had worked herself up into a condition of nervous agitation over the dilatory methods and general incompetence of the Hungarians. She could

not get anything done promptly, and could not get most things done at all. She threatened to go back to England with a very low opinion of Hungary and the Hungarians registered in her mind.

Now the Hungarians are, of all people I have met, the most sensitive to foreign criticism. They take an enormous amount of trouble over what they call "propaganda," by which they mean direct and indirect endeavours to produce a favourable impression on strangers, especially strangers who may be supposed to be influential in their own country, such as journalists and politicians. I once assisted at the visit of an English Bishop to Budapest. He was not one of those Bishops who has a seat in the House of Lords, but the Hungarians thought he had, and they sent the Prime Minister's private secretary in a large motor-car to meet him at the train. Even a casual and unknown tourist comes in for a share of attention, and behind the charming manners of the Hungarians there is always discernible a desire to win the good opinion of the traveller.

Hence the point of my friend's remark. The traveller who comes from Constantinople, having grown more or less accustomed to Eastern and Balkan ways, is most agreeably impressed with the civilization of Hungary and the business ability of the people. Budapest appears to be, what Budapest wants above all to be considered, the outpost of Western European civilization. But the traveller who comes from London by way of Paris and Vienna is apt to regard Budapest as the beginning

of the East and Hungary as merely the most westerly of the Balkan States.

If you want to please a Hungarian, say something about "we Western Europeans" and curl up your nose into a sneer at the mention of Roumania. If you want to insult him, call Hungary a Balkan State. Of course no stranger in Hungary ought to want to insult the Hungarians. The tourist is, after all, a guest, and the people of the country he visits are in some sense his hosts. Ordinary courtesy forbids the rudeness of outspoken criticism. Nevertheless it is useful to remember that a Hungarian can be goaded in this way. It was once my lot to seek an interview with an important Minister of State, no less a person than the Head of the Housing Office. This gentleman could talk no language except Hungarian—at least that is what he said, but I suspect that his profession of ignorance was a kind of defensive armour, designed to protect him against importunate foreigners. He knew that no stranger could speak his language and if he refused to speak any other, things came to a satisfactory deadlock. I took with me an interpreter, an exceedingly clever young Austrian lady. We were stopped at the door of the great man's office by a dogged policeman, armed, as the police are in Budapest, with a sword and a revolver. He declined to let us in, and remained indifferent to our arguments until my companion told him plainly that his methods were those of a Balkan State and that in any civilized country the door would have been opened to us at once. He let us in, which

shows that insults are occasionally useful, though perhaps not justifiable.

Therefore anyone who wants to form a really good opinion of the Hungarians, to judge their civilization as they want it to be judged, will not go straight to Hungary from London, Paris or Rome. He will get to Constantinople as best he can, stay there a while, put up for a week in Bucarest, and then another week in Belgrade. After that let him go to Budapest, and he will certainly be agreeably surprised. He will find himself among a cultivated and charming people, a people with Western ideas, Western methods, Western honesty, Western civilization. He will be impressed, and thenceforward will regard the Hungarians with affection and admiration. If he enters Hungary the other way, goes to Budapest with London and Paris fresh in his memory, he will still enjoy himself, still find much that is delightful in the Hungarians, but he will certainly feel that he has reached the beginning of the East, the first of the turbulent and troublesome Balkan States.

CHAPTER II

DOWN THE DANUBE

BEFORE leaving the steamboat pier at Vienna the traveller catches his first glimpse of the Hungarian flag; thenceforth, during the voyage and afterwards on the river, a familiar sight. It flies from the masts of the M.F.T.R. (Hungarian Steam Navigation Company) powerful tug-boats and passenger steamers, and from the sterns of the long, narrow barges which are towed in ceaseless procession up and down the Danube. These are iron-built boats, handsomer and more capacious than any boats I have seen elsewhere engaged in similar traffic. At the stern there is a high-built cabin for the steersman, which is invariably painted white. Underneath it are small cabins for the captain of the boat and his family. Forward are still smaller quarters for the crew. These barges have no means of propulsion of their own, neither engines nor sails, and are much too large and heavy to be poled along. They are steered by wheels which control huge rudders, necessarily huge on account of the swiftness of the current which must make steering on the downward voyage very difficult. They depend for their movement on the tug-boats, which drag four or five barges in

long lines, or marshalled in pairs, up and down the river.

The Hungarian flag has disappeared from the sea. That is perhaps the reason that it is displayed so constantly on the river. There is an old saying about two of the great Hungarian families: "Andrassy schwartz und gelb"—the black and yellow of the Habsburgs, to whom the Andrassys were more or less loyal. "Apponyi, grün, weiss, roth"—the Hungarian tricolour, for the Apponyis were of the Nationalist party in the old days of hostility to Austria. Now the black and yellow has vanished altogether, and the only rival of the Hungarian tricolour on the Upper Danube is the new flag of the Austrian Republic. It is an odd example of the twists which history takes that the Hungarian colours, once a half defiance of the Habsburg power, should now be the only sign left of any loyalty to that unfortunate family. Austria is a semi-Socialist, Czecho-Slovakia a bourgeois, republic. Hungary remains a kingdom in theory and aspiration. It would no doubt be a kingdom also in fact, if its neighbours, backed by the Western Powers, did not forbid it to have a king.

Two hours or so after leaving Vienna, at Hainburg, the river narrows and twists sharply between the rocky cliffs of the Little Carpathians on the left and the Leitha Mountains on the right. Here is the old "Gateway of Hungary," which is the gateway of Hungary no more, since the framers of the Treaty of Trianon played their game of "general post" with the boundaries of States in Eastern

Europe. On a lofty rock, near the ruins of an old castle, is the Millennium Monument. The rock is not in Hungary now. But the ruin and the monument have, both of them, something to tell us which will help in the understanding of Hungary to-day. The castle was destroyed by the French when Napoleon, in the plenitude of his success, was about to force the Peace of Schönbrunn on Francis of Austria. The Hungarians of that time were no fonder of the Austrian rule than at any time in their history. Count Stephen Széchenyi, then an officer of Huzzars, must have already been dreaming of a revived nationalism. But when Napoleon invited the Hungarians to throw off the Habsburg yoke and elect a ruler of her own, they remembered that Francis was not only Emperor of Austria but King of Hungary. They rallied to him, and were defeated at Györ on Hungarian soil. Pozsóny was occupied by the French and condemned to pay a huge ransom. The Battle of Wagram ended the campaign. Afterwards, when Metternich settled the affairs of Europe, Hungary reaped the reward of her loyalty—the usual reward of Hungarian loyalty—in the riveting of the yoke of Austrian absolutism tightly on her neck. The ruined castle on the rock at the Gate of Hungary is a symbol of the exhaustion, poverty and loss of liberty which were then, as so often in her history, the wages of Hungary's chivalry.

Beside the ruin stands the Millennium Monument, striking and impressive, but now even more pathetic than the ruined castle, a witness to the fact that

Hungary once was prosperous and once again was obstinately loyal, this time to the losing side.

At the end of the nineteenth century Hungary celebrated the thousand-year occupation of the land by the Magyar people. The nation had enjoyed a period of unexampled prosperity and progress since the settlement arrived at with Austria in the Ausgleich of 1869. Never during the whole thousand years had the Magyars been so powerful and so rich. A pardonable pride in their achievements found expression in buildings, monuments, statues everywhere. The great engineering feat of the creation of a navigable waterway at the Iron Gates was accomplished. The Parliament buildings in Budapest, ornate, over-decorated, perhaps arrogant in spirit, were set on the left bank of the Danube. The monument on the rock at Dévény, the western gate of Hungary, was erected beside the ruin of the castle which the French destroyed. Now the monument stands perched on its rock on foreign soil, outside the new Hungary, a pathetic witness to the downfall and humiliation of a country whose pride and greatness it once glorified.

After another half-hour the steamer stops at ——. What are we to call these places in Eastern Europe whose names are changed as often as their allegiance? This town, sheltered under the eastern slopes of the Little Carpathians, was Pressburg to the Austrians when the first Habsburg Kings of Hungary were crowned there. It was, and obstinately still is, Pozsóny to the Hungarians. Now that it has passed into the keeping of the Republic of Czecho-

Slovakia it is Bratislava. Its experience is by no means uncommon. All new Governments seem to delight in asserting themselves by changing place-names. We need not go to the Balkans or the once Austrian Tyrol for examples. Has not Dublin become Baile atha Cliath ? If nowhere else, at least on the postmarks affixed to envelopes by the officials of the Irish Free State. I suppose such changes are natural, perhaps right—evidences of a sort of patriotic energy in new States. But they are very bewildering to people who learned their geography before the new States were. At all events the town which a few Englishmen knew as Pressburg once, which all Hungarians call Pozsóny still, is Bratislava now in the new *Times Atlas*, and we must accept the fact.

I am told that it was not the original intention of the framers of the Treaty of Trianon to give this town to the Czechs. A draughtsman, so the story runs, was one day scribbling idly with a pencil on a map. He marked, without meaning anything by it, a line which included Pressburg, which is Pozsóny, which is Bratislava, in the territory to be handed over to Czecho-Slovakia. An acute Czech delegate came on the map by accident and, grasping the skirts of happy chance, presented it to the Treaty makers as the authentic official document. They, poor men, bewildered and weary, saw a map with lines on it, asked no questions, but stamped it with their official stamp, and thenceforward, under the guarantee of the Great Powers, Pozsony ceased to be Pozsóny or Pressburg and became

Bratislava, part of the Republic of the Czechs, Slovenes and so forth. I do not suppose that this story is true. I tell it because, though it sounds too absurd for comic opera, it very well might be true. No imagination of man is so remote from reality as to be written down impossible east of Vienna.

Bratislava—it must be Bratislava, I suppose—has been prosperous under its new government, perhaps more prosperous than it would have been had it remained in Hungary. The Czech has an instinct for commercial success, a certain business astuteness which makes for prosperity when it does not overreach itself. The Hungarian has no such talent and is only saved from complete commercial stagnation by the presence of the Jews in Budapest and their control of the whole business of the country.

The traveller can, if he chooses, disembark at Bratislava and go on with his journey next day. But it is not wise to do this unless the traveller is one of those heroes who are indifferent to bodily comfort. The Czechs are inferior to the Hungarians as hotel keepers. Even in Prague it is not possible to find really comfortable quarters. In Bratislava the accommodation is—I am putting it mildly—second-rate. Nor is there very much to reward the adventurer who stays. The situation of the town is picturesque, but that can be seen from the deck of the steamer. The town itself is what guide-books call "well planned," the streets are "spacious," the shops are "modern." All of this

is pleasant and a credit to the inhabitants, but scarcely worth travelling across Europe to enjoy.

Yet Bratislava has its history, and if only that history had remained written and graven in stone it would be as interesting a town as many in Europe. Unfortunately, as almost everywhere else in Hungary, the hand of the destroyer has fallen heavily on Bratislava. It claims to have been founded by the Romans, but of their sojourn, if they ever sojourned there at all, no vestige remains. It was certainly a town of great importance in the days of the Arpad Kings of Hungary, who recognized the strategic importance and commercial possibilities of the situation. Ferdinand I treated it as the capital of Hungary after the disastrous battle of Mohács, which left Hungary for a century under the domination of the Turks. It was the place of coronation of the earlier Habsburg Kings, and one of the meeting-places of the Hungarian Diet. But the most inspiring event in the history of Bratislava, that on which the imagination of the lover of great scenes will chiefly like to dwell, is the famous oath of allegiance of the Hungarian nobles to Maria Theresa in 1741.

The young Queen—she was only twenty-three when she succeeded to her troublesome inheritance—was beautiful and charming. She was, at the moment, most unfortunate. Europe was in arms against her. Kings gathered like vultures round what they believed to be the corpse of the Austrian Empire. The Viennese were openly disloyal. The Queen retired to Pozsóny (Bratislava), and spent

the summer there in the old Royal Castle, the ruins of which—almost the only monuments of the past which survive at all—are to be seen above the town. There, in September, the young Queen, with her infant son in her arms, made her appeal to the Hungarian nobles. It was just such an appeal made in just such a way as was sure to reach the boyish chivalry of the Magyars. They did not stop to consider the political situation or to calculate their ability to meet all Europe in arms. It was enough for them that the appeal was made by a young and beautiful woman, their Queen, with a claim to their allegiance. Waving naked swords, they responded with a mighty shout: "Vitam et sanguinem. Moriamur pro rege nostro, Maria Theresia."

The Hungarian nobles were as good as their word. They voted men and money. Their Huzzars, an irregular and, as one supposes, a somewhat savage force, made themselves famous on the battlefields of Europe, under Nádasky, Batthyányi and Eszterhazy. The House of Habsburg, of which it was said in 1741 that it had ceased to exist, counted for more in European affairs even than the Bourbons.

"I am a good Hungarian," said Maria Theresa, "and my heart is full of gratitude to the nation."

It well might be; and perhaps her sympathies *were* with the people who had stood by her in the days of her adversity. But the Austrian Court and the German interests of her house were too strong for her. Alas for chivalry! The Queen or her

counsellors devised a crafty plan for breaking the power of Hungarian nationalism. She lured the Hungarian magnates to Vienna, civilized them I suppose, taught them the ways of courts, and encouraged them to spend the great revenues of their estates in what was to them a foreign capital until they ceased to be Hungarian in anything but name. A cynic, with prophetic knowledge of the future, might have added two words to the oath which they swore in the Palace at Pozsóny: "Vitam et sanguinem *et patriam* pro rege nostro."

CHAPTER III

FURTHER DOWN THE DANUBE

BETWEEN Bratislava and Komárom the river runs through a district unnoticed by guide-books and unknown to travellers. There is no "scenery" in the sense in which the word is understood by those who tell the tourist, by means of asterisks, what he ought to see. That is to say, there are neither mountains, nor cliffs, waterfalls, forests or picturesque ruins. It is a district without towns, almost without villages; so far as I know devoid of historical interest. There are no battle-fields or scenes of famous sieges. It is the one district in Hungary which has never been fought over, for the sufficient reason that no armies could march there, no camps could be pitched, and no fortresses built to be attacked or defended. Yet this district, where the river flows between the Great and Little Schilt, has a singular fascination of its own for those who can feel it.

It is a land of waterways. Here the mighty Danube splits up into countless streams, sluggish all of them, most of them shallow. They wind among stretches of land which is scarcely to be called land. It is low-lying and water saturated. Men live there with difficulty, seeking dry mounds

for the sites of their houses, pathetically striving to grow the crops which men desire on soil where tall rushes and all kinds of water vegetation flourish rankly.

Hour after hour the steamer splashes her way through this strange country where often for long spaces of time there is no sign at all of man's existence. The river is a river no more. It has no banks, no boundaries. You cannot say, "This is the Danube, and just here it ceases to be the Danube." There is an immensely intricate network of waterways. They open to left and to right. They are to be seen broadening into lagoons, narrowing into ditches for miles on either side of the steamer's course. So flat is everything that the steamer's deck seems a lofty vantage point from which a view over soaked land stretches and is limited only by the horizon.

Swinburne writes of such a stretch of waterlogged land in his poem "By the North Sea":

> In and out and in the sharp straits wander.
> Out and in and out the salt sea strives,
> Salt and moist and multiform, but yonder
> Say what sign of days or nights survives?

He wrote of salt water, but I think that the dreary desolation which he describes is even more fascinatingly impressive here where the water is fresh. The very luxuriance of the rank growth of tall rushes, the whispering of the leaves of stumpy willow-trees, and the knowledge that the whole mass of water, all that is in the wide passages, the

calm lagoons, the narrow channels, is in silent steady motion towards the remotely far-off sea—all this seems to add to the melancholy fascination of the place.

I saw this district first on a summer day when the sun was so hot that I had to seek a patch of shade on deck behind the paddle-box. Even on such a day there was no glitter on the water, no real brightness in the green of the surrounding rushes and willow-trees or the patches of soaked grass or the leaves of the bushes whose roots cling to the mud of the mounds on which they grow. In the late autumn, when the mists hang over all this district and fine drifting rain obliterates the distiction between the waters above and the waters below, this must be the very home of the shadowy spirits which tempt men into Accidie, the last, least carnal and deadliest of the Seven Deadly Sins. If one could live here—but that for civilized man would be impossible—how easy it would be to slip into that condition of listless apathetic melancholy, that luxury of entirely hopeless sadness, which the old hermits recognized as the fatal enemy of all kinds of life.

Later on comes the winter, when the steamers and the processions of towed barges cease to hurry through this district of watery melancholy. The frost comes, stiffening and cracking the tall stems of the reeds, laying belts of flat white ice along the margins of streams and ponds. Blocks of ice, little islands of grey ice come floating slowly down. They drift into backwaters, are caught and frozen

fast. In the main arms of the river they drift against the banks and stick. Fresh blocks impinge upon them, climb up current-driven, are broken and fall back in jagged masses. They reach outwards from each bank till only a narrow way is left along which more ice drifts slowly down, until at last the whole surface is frozen solid and nothing is seen which is not still. Beyond the sentimental sorrow of the traveller on a summer day, beyond the melancholy apathy of the autumn ghost land of the shadows of Accidie, is the complete and calm despair of the motionless death of this land in winter time.

At the eastern end of this land of marshes stands the town of Komárom, once a place of military importance, dominated by a fortress which owed its strength to its position at the junction of the Vág and the Danube. Komárom is Hungarian no longer, being one of the towns handed over to the Czechs as part of their new country. For sentimental reasons, if for no other, its loss was bitter to the Hungarians. In Komárom was born Jókai, the novelist who went nearer to achieving a European reputation than any other Hungarian man of letters. His novels are translated into most European languages and thirty years ago were known and praised in England. Whether they were ever much read I do not know. Foreign novelists whom our intellectuals combine to recommend are often more praised than read—even by the intellectuals themselves. In Hungary itself Jókai's reputation does not stand as high as that of some other writers

of whom foreigners know nothing or next to nothing.

For the sake of the house in which Jókai was born Hungary would no doubt have wished to retain Komárom. But the place has other memories. The inner fortress dates from the fifteenth century and bears on one of its bastions the proud inscription: "Nec arte, nec Marte"—"Neither by force nor fraud can this place be captured." The Turks are said to have besieged it twice during their period of occupation and to have failed to take it. But dearer to the memory of the modern Magyar is the fact that it is the last stronghold in the country which held out against the Austrians in 1849. It was twice besieged by Windisgratz. The first time it was relieved by the Hungarian commander György, after the battle of Acs, the last of his brilliant victories. Besieged again, it was held by General Klapka until all hope of succour was ended and the national cause lost. It was the last place that flew the Hungarian tricolour, and Klapka surrendered without dishonour. Now, for a while at all events, the Hungarian flag will not be seen over its fortress.

Estergom, the next stopping-place of the steamer, is on the right bank of the river, and therefore remains in Hungary, the new Hungary. It was once the capital of old Hungary, the oldest Hungary of the Arpad Kings. It is now the seat of the Primate of Hungary, whose Palace is the most imposing building in the town. On the hill above it, and above the town, stands the Cathedral, a

huge edifice, more grandiose than beautiful, built during the first half of the nineteenth century. It stands on the site of a much older church, destroyed, as was almost everything else in Estergom, by the Turks during the period of their occupation. In itself this building is uninteresting, save as an example of the taste of nineteenth-century ecclesiastics, but its Treasury contains some interesting and valuable things. The Calvary of King Matthias, once the ornament of that monarch's private chapel, is a fine specimen of thirteenth-century Florentine work. The double cross presented to King Stephen by Pope Silvester II is a relic to which peculiar sanctity attaches, partly religious, partly political (if there is such a thing as political sanctity). It used to be borne before the King by a Bishop on ceremonial occasions of special importance.

But Estergom's chief claim to the reverence and affection of Hungarians lies in the fact that it was the birthplace of Stephen, Saint and King. He is one of the great figures, perhaps the very greatest, in Hungarian history. It is impossible to travel far or live long in Hungary without coming across traces of a national veneration of his name. Hungarian history and the spirit of the people are scarcely to be understood without reference to this first and greatest of the Kings.

Of Stephen as a man we know extremely little. Hardly anything survives which gives us a glimpse of his personality. But the work that he did for Hungary is plain enough. He effected the conversion of the country to Christianity. He organized

A GENERAL VIEW OF ESTERGOM FROM THE DANUBE, SHOWING THE CATHEDRAL AND CITADEL

a confused tribe of half-savage people into a State. Through the religion he established and the organization he enforced he set an enduring mark on Hungary. It became, in aspiration always, in fact generally, a European country instead of a settlement of Asiatics. It is to Stephen that Hungary owes the fact, never forgotten by her people, that she was the bulwark of Europe against Asiatic invasion, the great champion of the Cross against the Crescent.

The task of converting the Hungarians to Christianity was no easy one. A spirited people does not like being converted to a strange religion ; and even when the conversion is more or less effected there is a liability to sudden relapse. Stephen, who seems himself to have been sincere and convinced, used both the persuasiveness of the missionary and the vigour of a warrior king in establishing Christianity. He made tours of the country in company with a monk called Astrik, afterwards the first Bishop of Estergom, setting before the people the advantages of the new faith. When peaceable argument failed, he laid about him with a sword, and in the course of his reign suppressed no less than three rebellions which were inspired by a preference for the old paganism. He had his reward in the establishment of the new faith and in the approval of Pope Sylvester II, who bestowed on him and his successors the title of Apostolic King.

In the matter of political organization he was both vigorous and sagacious. His problem, the one that had to be faced by most kings at that time, was to impose the will of the State on a

number of powerful, lawless and perfectly independent nobles. He solved it by establishing a powerful monarchy. But he did not—perhaps deliberately did not—destroy the spirit of the nobles. The virility of the Hungarian magnate is one of the outstanding features of the history of Hungary. This aristocracy retained the reality of power longer than any other in Europe, and although their loyalty to the monarchy was always strong, they were firm in the assertion of their privileges, which, after the manner of aristocracies, they called national liberties and rights. No doubt the persistence of this spirit in Hungary through centuries of almost perpetual warfare and periods of almost intolerable misfortunes is a proof of the wisdom and strength of King Stephen.

CHAPTER IV

STILL FURTHER DOWN THE DANUBE

VISEGRÁD, like Estergom on the Hungarian (right) side of the river, is a summer resort and watering-place for the people of Budapest.

The Hungarians understand the business of watering-places very well and generally manage to provide the sort of accommodation and amusements that summer visitors require without vulgarizing, as we generally do, the place they set out to popularize. They have a knack of building villas which look picturesque at a distance and are fairly comfortable inside. The hotels and bathing establishments erected over and around the medical springs which abound all over the country are dignified buildings, rather suggestive of churches I suppose they may be regarded as a kind of temples consecrated to Esculapius, whose worship is probably the most popular of modern cults.

Visegrád would not have been an easy place to vulgarize, even if it had been in the hands of people with much less artistic instinct than the Hungarians. It stands in the midst of one of the most picturesque portions of the Danube scenery and is dominated by a ruined castle, very finely set on top of a cliff. There was a castle and royal residence

in Visegrád as far back as the days of the Arpad Ladislaus, King and Saint, the second King of his dynasty to be canonized. But of that castle probably nothing at all remains. The tower called Solomon's is comparatively modern, a restoration, although its name indicates that it was the place where King Ladislaus imprisoned his cousin Solomon, a pretender to the throne. Solomon was a picturesque and unfortunate man. He might have secured the throne and kept it if he had not made the mistake of relying on German help. The Hungarians, ever patriotic, preferred a more national King. Solomon, with his German friends, fought and was beaten. King Ladislaus, a shining example of chivalry, forgave him and invited him to live at the Court. Solomon, unfortunately, took to plotting and intriguing. He had to be shut up in Solomon's Tower. In the end he was released, and spent the close of his life as a hermit in a cave on the shores of the Adriatic—perhaps repenting of his follies.

But it was not Ladislaus, but another and later King, Matthias the Just, who made Visegrád famous. Matthias was the most splendid and perhaps the most enlightened of the Hungarian Kings. The progress, culture and wealth of his reign were rendered possible by the achievements of his father, John Hunyadi—Hunyadi János, to give his name in its Hungarian form. Even in a book of this kind, which is not a history, a few words ought to be said about this man, if only because his name is now known throughout Europe in connection with an aperient water. Such are the

VISEGRAD, HUNGARY—THE CASTLE OVERLOOKING THE DANUBE. ON THE LEFT IS THE LOFTY SOLOMON'S TOWER

queer tricks which ironical fate plays with human reputations. In his own day Hunyadi János was a fine fighter, a great general, and a man whom not only Hungary but Europe owes a debt. His origin is obscure. His rise to greatness was due to his own qualities, unaided by the accidents of birth or position. He spent his life fighting and beating the Turks, and saved not only Hungary but Central Europe from an Ottoman dominion.

Those were days of fierce and merciless fighting. Perhaps no wars were ever waged with greater savageness than those between the Hungarians and the Turks. The business was too stern for gentleness or pity on either side, though now and again the dark pages of the history are illuminated with flashes of that chivalry which can pay honour to a beaten foe. There was a mighty Hungarian warrior, one Kinizsi, whom the Turks called a superhuman devil. It was his habit to fight with a huge sword in each hand, which perhaps terrified his enemies but must have been inconvenient to the man himself. He once celebrated a victory by a dance of triumph, carrying as he pranced about the bodies of three dead Turks, one in each hand and one gripped between his teeth. Such was the spirit in which those wars were waged. But John Hunyadi was something more than a leader of wild horsemen, pre-eminent for strength and bravery. He had the qualities of a general and a statesman. His strategy must have been bewildering to his enemies. It was certainly daring and original, occasionally rather hard on his friends.

There is a fine story told of one of Hunyadi's battles and the singular stratagem by which it was won. The Turks were naturally very anxious to kill or capture the Hungarian leader who had so often defeated them. Orders were given, like those of the Syrian King about Ahab, that the Turkish soldiers were to concentrate on the effort to destroy Hunyadi himself. "Fight neither against small nor great, but only against the King of Israel." Some news of this order seems to have reached the Hungarian camp and one of Hunyadi's knights, by name Simon Kemény, begged to be allowed to assume his leader's arms and accoutrements. Hunyadi, though he was not the kind of man who ever shrank from personal danger, agreed to the proposal, and devised a novel plan of battle. He gave Kemény a company of five hundred of the best Hungarian knights, men who could be counted on to sell their lives dearly, and left them in possession of the Hungarian position. He himself, with the mass of his cavalry, retired for some distance and concealed himself. The Turks attacked. Animated by the sight of one whom they took for Hunyadi —Kemény resembled him in face and figure—they fought with the utmost determination. The Hungarians, overwhelmed by numbers, struggled desperately, and fell one after another, until their line was broken and the Turks rode over them. Then, amid the confusion of the apparent victory, Hunyadi charged. It is said that Kemény, hacked by the swords of the Turks and lying wounded to death, heard the thunder of the horse hoofs of Hunyadi's

charge and knew that the sacrifice of himself and his five hundred was not in vain.

Hunyadi died, smitten by the plague, after one of his greatest victories, and Matthias, his son, succeeded him.

The country enjoyed a period of comparative peace during his reign. There were wars, Turkish wars and wars against rebels at home, but warfare no longer absorbed the whole energies of King and people. Matthias gained for himself the title of "the Just" by his administration of the internal affairs of his kingdom, and he was, I think, the only King whom the Hungarian magnates ever trusted. During his reign they ceased the suspicious watchfulness which at all other times was characteristic of their jealousy for their "rights." They actually asked the King not to call an assembly of the Estates for two years, declaring that they would ignore the illegality of any decrees he made during that time, feeling sure that, though illegal, they would be right.

Matthias was a true son of the Renaissance in his love of display, his encouragement of art and his appreciation of learning. He made the Palace of Visegrád "an earthly paradise" and "the centre of the universe"—in the opinion of his contemporaries. He certainly made it a very splendid place. There were hanging gardens, marble fountains, statues everywhere—the Hungarians still love statues more than most people do—and frescoes of which Fra Lippo Lippi is said to have supervised the painting. In Buda he established a library

which was famous in its day, and might be famous still if the Turks had not destroyed it. He is credited with knowing the exact position of every book in it, a remarkable achievement for a King who had a good deal else to do. There were over ten thousand volumes. He established two universities and many schools. He encouraged building, and a few of his churches survive. Little or nothing else does; the Turks saw to that. His art, his learning, his culture vanished as completely as the splendour of his pageantry, leaving nothing but memories behind.

At his court in Visegrád he gathered round him a crowd of nobles and prelates, many of them generously paid, all of them, we may suppose, fed and clothed. Their business was to act the part of supers in the splendid displays which Matthias organized. The reception of an ambassador from a foreign power was one of the opportunities he liked to use. His courtiers put on their most sumptuous clothes—and Hungarians even to-day understand clothes thoroughly; they brandished swords and caracoled about on spirited horses. Their head-dresses, weapons, collars, buttons, even their spurs, glittered with precious stones. They blew horns and shouted. For the sake of the ambassadors, one hopes that this part of the proceeding took place in the open air, for the Hungarians get more noise out of musical instruments and can make more noise by shouting than any other people. At night thousands of wax torches were lit, and in all probability the Sardas was danced, as it still is, with intensity of feeling.

There was probably more in these performances than childish love of display. Matthias, though he liked pageantry, was himself a man of simple habits. He probably understood very well the political value of splendour. A simple-minded ambassador might be reduced to a condition of stammering incoherence by the grandeur of the King. There was an envoy of the Sultan's, whom Matthias received in Visegrád. When the doors of the Palace were thrown open, the Sultan's messenger beheld the King standing above him in one of the hanging gardens. In groups around the King and above him were courtiers and nobles wearing the most splendid imaginable clothes, carrying glittering arms and all the paraphernalia of a really well-staged pantomime. The envoy was almost struck dumb. All he could manage to say was: "The Padisha greets you. The Padisha greets you." It took him several days to recover from his stupor, and when he was again led into the King's presence we may suppose that he was in a mood in which it was fairly easy to deal with him.

Yet that envoy, being a Turk, must have been accustomed to a good deal of display in his own country, at the court of his own monarch, which leads one to suppose that Matthias did this sort of thing really well and was shrewd enough to understand the practical value of impressing his own magnificence on the servants of other potentates.

Now

> All the pomps of yesterday
> Are one with Nineveh and Tyre.

Strangers, who scarcely know the name of the King, stare with bored curiosity at the spiky ruins of the castle of Visegrád, and are borne forward by their steamer to the joys of hotel life in Budapest. Villa dwellers, summer visitors air their best clothes and listen to gipsy bands where once Matthias's courtiers pranced and blew their horns. Trippers, with luncheon baskets, carried up-stream by a panting excursion steamer, may take the trouble to climb the rock where the castle stands, gape at it for a few minutes, and then descend to drink white wine and yellow beer in the restaurants beside the pier.

CHAPTER V

BUDAPEST

CITIES ought always to be entered by ship instead of by train if this is possible. Especially is this the case when the traveller is approaching the city for the first time. He wants to get, and ought to get, the best possible impression to start with. Trains never give it. They deliberately choose to enter cities through purlieus and mean streets. The traveller sees the backs of sordid houses, the grimy patches of ground not to be called gardens which sordid people use as drying places for imperfectly washed linen. Of such views comes nothing but disgust, and the wise traveller shuts his eyes or fixes them on the opposite side of his railway carriage while his train draws sluggishly into the terminus. Perhaps it is not the fault of the railways that their trains come through these unlovely ways. It may be that the surroundings of railway lines grow hideous, whatever they originally were, when trains run through them. People who can afford to live in clean and good houses, amid squares and parks, fly from the noise and the smuts of trains. Only those who cannot help themselves live near railways. They lose heart quickly and allow their dwellings to become the

soiled things we see as the trains slow down. However this may be, it is certainly true that a city does not look its best when approached by train.

Budapest is no exception to this rule, but the railway traveller there gets a curious impression of the unfinishedness of the city. I do not remember this feeling about any other city I have ever entered; but Budapest gives it. It seems as if at some time, ten, fifteen years ago, the city was growing, spreading rapidly in the hideous way that cities do, and then suddenly stopped short, even perhaps shrunk back a little into itself, as if the outer fringes of it had shrivelled a little like the skin of a stored apple when it dries. This is what actually happened. Before the war Budapest was afloat on a strong tide of prosperity. Factories and the rows of workmen's houses which follow factories were increasing and spreading outwards in a semicircle on the Pest side of the river. There was no natural obstacle to stop them, neither mountain, river, gorge nor lake. For miles and miles, eastward, south-eastward, north-eastward, there is a broad level plain entirely suitable for the factories, streets, chimneys, tramways, railways of an industrial community. Builders had nothing to do but acquire a patch of land and then build. But with the lavish carelessness of men who have endless resources they picked and chose, leaving large spaces unbuilt on behind them, taking kangaroo jumps forward to fields which for some reason attracted them. No doubt if the prosperity had

continued all the intervening spaces would have been covered with buildings and the outskirts of Pest would have become a large industrialized tract. But the springs of prosperity dried up and the impulse to spread was killed. The war came, and the consequences of the war—consequences so dreadful for Hungary that they deserve to be called by the ugliest word yet devised by men of science, sequelæ.

The result is this queer sense of incompleteness, of arrested energy which the traveller gets who enters Budapest by train from Vienna. The railway does its best to heighten the impression. It gets round somehow—I have never understood why—to the extreme south of the city on the west bank of the river. It passes through one of these unfinished, half-industrialized districts, Kelenföld, rolls over mud flats and crosses the river by a railway bridge, so designed as to permit the traveller to see as little as possible of the beautiful reaches of the river to the north and their stately spanning bridges. Having successfully avoided beauty in the crossing, the railway plunges at once into the almost impossibly ugly southern outskirts of Pest, curves slowly round, still keeping away from all that one could desire to see, into one or other of the great stations, the Keleti probably, the Nyugati possibly. It is one of the peculiarities of the Hungarian railway system that no one, not even the station-master, is ever quite sure at which of these two stations a train from Vienna will arrive.

We read of Balak, King of Moab, that when he wanted to induce Balaam to curse Israel, he took him up to the top of a mountain and showed him the camp of the chosen people. Balaam promptly blessed them. Then Balak led the prophet to another place from which he could see, not the whole camp, but only the outskirts of it. It was a crafty thing to do. If I knew a really potent prophet and wanted him to curse Budapest—which is nearly the same thing as cursing the Israelites, since Budapest, as its inhabitants say bitterly, ought to be called Judah Pest—I should take him into the city by rail from Vienna, showing him the most unlovely outskirts in the world. He would then, even if he were as stubborn as Balaam was, certainly utter a curse or two.

Fortunately there is another way of entering Budapest—by steamer from the north—and I know nothing finer in the way of city scenery than the view which the traveller gets who comes this way. Naples, approached by sea, is glorious. So is Lisbon. So is poor battered Dublin. So are a dozen other cities. But for the most part they owe their beauty chiefly to their surroundings. The Bay of Naples would be splendid if there had never been a house built on the shore of it. So would the Tagus scenery if there had been no city of Lisbon. But the beauty of Budapest is city beauty, depending very little on the rolling hills westwards, not at all on the flat land to the east. I think that what makes it so beautiful is the wonderful grouping of the buildings on both sides

of the river. On the right, the Buda side, are the hills, crowned and clothed with spires. Highest is the graceful spire of the Coronation Church. Below it and beyond it the spires—quaintly bulbous spires—of a dozen other churches. On the extreme northward edge of the hill is a Government building, the storehouse of the Hungarian archives, I believe, rising in what pretends to be a spire but is really a chimney; a building and a spire which, viewed close, make the spectator laugh if he does not curse, so grotesquely comic are they. Yet even this building somehow fits in with the church spires and the long fronts of the buildings making a cityscape—is there such a word as cityscape?—of unsurpassed beauty.

Nobody planned it. Nobody, I think, ever does plan the successful grouping of buildings. When it occurs it is the result of accident or some instinct. It exists elsewhere of course. You see it in England, in Somerset, for instance, where church, manor house, great barn and village street are exquisitely grouped. But I have never seen more perfect grouping than in Budapest. Southward from the Coronation Church and the house of the Prime Minister, stands on a hill of its own the Royal Palace. A young Hungarian with whom I happened to be walking one day stopped suddenly and, pointing to this building, said: "I have been in London. Buckingham Palace cannot compare with that." I think he was right. Buckingham Palace would not make much show set down beside this Palace which the Habsburg kings never cared to

inhabit, in a corner of which the Regent now lives, keeping some little state, until Hungary gets a king again. Certainly Number 10 Downing Street is immeasurably inferior to the white-walled, broad-balconied house in which the Hungarians lodge their Prime Ministers.

Yet in itself this great Palace is not a thing of special beauty. The original Palace was built by King Matthias, the Just and Magnificent. The Turks destroyed it. Maria Theresa, who really owed a good deal to the Hungarians, built again on the site of the present palace. Her edifice was partly burnt and afterwards restored in 1849. It was enlarged in 1892, and enlarged to some purpose. There are, I am told, eight hundred and sixty rooms in it. The façade on the Danube side is immensely long. It is not lacking in a certain kind of dignity It possesses a unity of design and conception, but there is very little æsthetic pleasure to be gained by visiting it. Only its setting is wholly satisfying. It does form, viewed from the river or the eastern bank of it, a spendid centre for the splendid panorama of Buda.

South of the Palace is the Gellért Hegy, the hill of St. Gellért or Gerard. On its side, looking over Pest across the river, is a statue of the saint. He was a martyr, and the manner of his death shows how far from complete St. Stephen's christianizing of the country was. In 1046, during the reign of Andrew I, one of Stephen's successors, Gellért, the Bishop of Csanád, was on his way to Pest to meet the King. The country was in the middle of one

of its frequent outbursts of paganism. The Christian clergy were being attacked everywhere. Gellért was captured by a mob on the hill which now bears his name, killed, and, the popular legend says, rolled down into the Danube in a barrel. His statue—one can hardly say his memory—stands to-day brooding over the city which he had failed to christianize, which is perhaps as far from being Christian now as it was when its people killed him.

Yet, "the blood of the martyrs . . ." The Hungarians certainly learned to fight for Christendom, and if the Cross could be made to prevail to-day by the use of the sword, Budapest would no doubt be a strikingly Christian city. Unfortunately, the new Semitic invaders use weapons against which the sword is powerless. One wonders if the martyrdom of a new St. Gellért would be any use. Unfortunately, no one now seems to wish for that kind of crown.

On top of the Gellért Hegy stands the old citadel, an unimpressive fortress now, some earthworks, some loosely knit stone bastions, a group of low flat buildings. But to the eye of the imaginative historian it is something very great, the rallying point of Christendom against the Turks, the boss of the shield outstretched on the strong right arm of Hungary against the blows of the Mohammedan invaders.

The citadel is the last point in the panorama of the west bank of the river. After it the hills drop sharply to the level of dull streets and the mud flats of the river bank. Compared to the buildings

to the north of it, the palaces and the churches with their spires, the citadel is insignificant. Yet it possesses the power which nothing else there does, nothing except perhaps the Coronation Church, of stirring the heart. Long before I ever saw Budapest I read about this hill and its citadel in the pages of the most brilliant book written about Hungary in our time. Sometimes while I lived in Budapest I have gazed up at the dark mass of the hill at night, heard the Danube rushing at its base, seen the scattered lights twinkling on its side, or sat on the scanty grass below the citadel itself in the fresh heat of an early summer day, and always there has come back to me some memory of what Tharaud wrote about it.

"The ancient city of Buda is like Marathon, like Salamis, like the plains of Catalonia, one of the places where the destiny of our civilization in its strife with the Orient was decided. The vast plain of Hungary, which finds its boundary in this hill, possessed for centuries an irresistible fascination for Asiatic peoples. On their long journeys from the frontiers of China this was a desirable halting-place. Here for a while tents could be pitched, horses breathed and watered in the great river, before the renewal of the journey towards the conquest of the West. At the very foot of the hill of Buda Attila set up his camp, that Etzelburg which the imagination of the poet of the Nibelungen fixed on as the centre of the world. After him came tribes of Tartars and Mongols, squadrons of horsemen wheeling across the plain. They appeared

THE FRANZ JOSZEF QUAY, PEST, SHOWING THE CITADEL OF THE GELLERT HEGY

and disappeared like clouds of dust, like the phantom figure of Delibab, the will o' the wisp which haunts the horizons of the broad-spread plains. Only the Hungarians settled steadfastly in this region. For ages they were the terror of Western Europe. Then, forsaking the worship of the White Stallion, they accepted the faith of Rome and became the champions of Christianity against their Asiatic kinsmen.

"A thousand years have passed since their conversion under King Stephen. Till then the hill of Buda remained unoccupied, for these warrior horsemen only cared for grassy plains where their horses and sheep might graze, plains which reminded them of the Steppes from which they came. Their new religion opened to them the doors of Western life and culture. They climbed the hill and built on it—they who had never built before—churches, houses, fortresses.

"For centuries this rock was the prize in the struggle between East and West. Men with narrow eyes and yellow skins came in ceaseless waves to attack the fortress and all feudal Europe rallied to its defence. Princes of the House of Anjou, grand-nephews of Saint Louis, came there as Crusaders, and brought with them the brilliant civilization of fourteenth-century France. From the Danube to the Adriatic the land was covered with towns, great houses, monasteries. Here, on this very hill of Buda, the masons of Braye-sur-Somme built a royal palace like the great châteaux which are to be found and admired in the Ile-de-France. Year by year the country of the sainted

apostolic king grew into the manners of the West, until a new host of enemies appeared, more formidable than the Huns of Attila or the Tartars of Batou Khan.

"For half a century two Transylvanian heroes, John Hunyadi and Matthias Corvinus, repulsed the assaults of the Turks. The Angelus which sounds at midday still commemorates four hundred years afterwards the service which these two men rendered to all Catholic Christendom. Never was the hill of Buda more brilliant than in those days when every hour brought a fresh threat of destruction. Latin civilization, which had lately conquered the hill and brought the gift of Christianity, brought later the spirit of the House of Anjou, and flourished anew, but this time after the fashion of the half-pagan Renaissance. Corvinus gathered round him Italian artists, and with their help built palaces and churches. He filled them with works of art and priceless manuscripts. Of his rude fortress he made a city like the cities of Tuscany and Umbria. Great wagons, protected by military escorts, brought to Buda the fabrics of Flanders, the wines of the Rhine, all the produce of Europe. They travelled on across the plains to the Saxon cities of Transylvania, and still onwards towards the East, returning at length laden with spices, perfumes, carpets and arms of Damascus steel. Galleys, manned by Turkish prisoners, went up and down the Danube to trade with Venetian merchants and bring home the accumulated treasures of Italy and the Levant. Then suddenly came a disaster, an

irrecoverable loss. The janissaries annihilated the Hungarian army at Mohács, and the citizens of Buda were forced to hand over the keys of Buda to their conquerors. Asia was established on the hill. All that belonged to France and Italy was destroyed. The Cathedral of Matthias was turned into a mosque. The galleys of the Sultan Soliman carried down the river the treasures of the city packed in leather trunks. The statues of John Hunyadi, of Matthias and his wife, and the great bronze candelabra which adorned their palace were exhibited as trophies in the circus of Byzantium. Towns, castles, monasteries, the whole country was given over to pillage. Hungary became again what it was when the first invaders came—a land of pasture and marshes. Two centuries and a half later Charles de Lorraine came at the head of an army recruited from every nation in Europe. He retook the citadel, but he found there none of the buildings, none of the treasures of the golden age of the House of Anjou and the Hunyadi Kings.

"Of late years the Hungarians have tried to restore the glories of their ancient hill. They have built ramparts, bastions, towers, immense stairways. They have restored the Church of Matthias. They have built after the mediæval fashion in the hope of recapturing for the imagination the greatness of bygone days. But the past is not to be won back. Neither science nor even love can restore life to that which has ceased to be. What time has destroyed finds no resurrection save in the hearts of dreamers."

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CHAPTER VI

BUDAPEST

THE view of the right bank of the river, of Buda as distinguished from Pest, is finer than the view of the left bank beside which the steamer comes to rest in the end. But the view of the left bank is fine too, especially in the evening shortly before sunset; and it is at this time that the steamer from Vienna reaches Budapest if the traveller is wise enough to come in early summer or early autumn.

Indeed these are the two seasons of the year at which it is best to visit Hungary. Summer is too hot for comfort, and the beauty of the country, even of the city of Budapest, is dulled by the turning of green into brown. Winter is too cold. Few English people really enjoy themselves in a temperature as low as the Fahrenheit zero. And there is a north wind which comes scouring down the Danube. I dislike that wind intensely. It causes acute pain in the ears, the tip of the nose and other half-detached portions of the body, finger-tips, for instance, which happen to be insufficiently covered. The Hungarians understand building houses for cold weather and have ways of

THE HOUSE OF KING MATHIAS (1478) AT SOPRON, SHOWING THE TOWER OF THE TOWN HALL

heating them which we might very well copy at home. It is certainly true that if you are thoroughly warm indoors you can stand a surprising amount of cold outside without inconvenience. But the casual traveller seldom has a house or a flat at his disposal. He lives in an hotel, and the Budapest hotel keeper is economical in the matter of heating. The Gellért, a great new hotel on the Buda side of the river, is built over hot springs and it is warm in the coldest weather. The trouble there is that it is hot to the point of suffocation in warm weather, since the springs underneath will not accommodate themselves to the seasons. No other hotel in Budapest is nearly warm enough.

Budapest, in spite of the north wind, is not so cold as many other parts of Hungary. It was my lot once to travel a hundred miles or so in mid-winter to a funeral. I journeyed across a snow-covered, frost-bound plain, perfectly flat, entirely without features, in a train so hot that I sat in a gentle perspiration. My only fellow-passengers were occasional sportsmen with guns and dead hares, dressed to the extreme limits of sportiveness, who got in at wayside stations, thawed awhile and got out again. When I reached my destination at last I was met by a man with a sleigh and two horses. Long icicles hung from his moustaches. Standing round the grave, while the funeral service went on, were a number of men, miners from a neighbouring coal-pit, whose breath froze as soon as it left their mouths until the lower parts of their faces too were draped in icicles. The day was

perfectly still and the temperature was 10 or 12 degrees below zero.

That funeral, apart from the discomfort of the temperature, was interesting and curious. It is a Hungarian custom to pronounce funeral orations round the grave. We had three of them, one from a representative of the mining company which the dead man had served as an engineer, one from a local magnate, and one from a working miner who stepped out of the rank of those around the grave. These men carried their mining-lamps in their hands and the tiny jets of flame showed up strangely in the still air against the heavy grey of the snow-laden sky and the dull white of the surrounding graves. We had hymns—long-drawn, wailing Hungarian hymns sung by a miners' choir. Then when the last of them had dragged itself slowly to its final note, the choir suddenly broke into a cheerful song. It was, I was told, the song sung at the farewell feasts given to departing emigrants. The man whom they honoured that day was doubtless an emigrant too, to a land farther off, we hope happier, than the America in which so many Hungarians have found new homes. After this song every man stepped forward in turn and flung a handful of clay, frozen earth, into the grave, shouting three words of Hungarian, the greeting given every morning outside the mine by those on the surface to those who are about to descend. That, too, seemed appropriate. Was not the body, if not the soul, descending into the earth ?

Picturesque and interesting the whole ceremony !

But in that temperature it seemed to me rather long. I do not boast of a moustache, so I escaped the curtaining of my mouth with icicles, but my limbs were stiff when I got away, and very welcome to me was the favourite Hungarian drink of hot tea with rum in it instead of milk.

For enthusiastic skaters and skiers this sort of thing, even eight or ten weeks of it at a stretch, is no doubt well enough; and the Danube frozen hard the whole way across is a fine sight; but most wayfarers will be wise to choose the spring or autumn rather than the winter.

Autumn, the early part of it, has many beauties, not least among them the piles of richly coloured fruit which fill the markets and the booths along the quays below the Elizabeth Bridge. There are huge stacks of melons, with dark green or bright yellow rinds, pink-fleshed inside; great baskets of grapes, purple and green; tomatoes in piles, apples, green and red and brown; huge pears, walnuts bigger than any I have seen elsewhere, and of course heaps of rich scarlet paprika. But this is a perennial to be seen at any season of the year. Certainly not less beautiful is the autumn outside the city. Among the thickly wooded hills behind Buda there is a feast of colour among the dying leaves. Farther afield the gathering-in of the grape harvest is a sheer delight.

Yet I think that anyone who wishes to see Hungary, and especially Budapest, at their best ought to go there in May. Then the acacias are in full bloom along the streets (rakparts) above the

river quays. Then every square and garden—Budapest is a city of small open spaces—is rich with flowering shrubs, some of them well known at home like the forsythia, others which I have never seen in England. The forsythias come first of all and flower with a luxuriance and splendour unknown at home. A little later all the suburb gardens of Buda are full of fruit-trees in blossom, cherries, apples, pears. The wild flowers in the woods and fields are not less wonderful. Snowdrops, grape hyacinths, anemone pulsatilla, cowslips. There are stretches of woodland over which it is scarcely possible to walk without treading on grape hyacinths, wood violets and anemones.

But all this is for the wanderer later on. His first view of Budapest, seen as the steamer sweeps round the side of Margaret Island and under the Margaret Bridge, is not of fruit or flowers, but of buildings, and those on the Pest side are scarcely less striking than the churches and palaces on the Buda hills In themselves these buildings are not very attractive. The huge Parliament houses are overloaded with ornament and miss the dignity they should obtain through architectural perverseness. The Hungarians are extremely proud of these buildings and are for ever comparing them with Westminster. Except that both piles stand close over a river, there is no point of resemblance that I have ever been able to discover.

The dome of St. Stephen's Cathedral seems to be attempting, and failing, to dominate the city. That cathedral is, I think, the least inspiring of all

THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, BUDAPEST, VIEWED FROM THE MARGARET BRIDGE

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great ecclesiastical buildings. It is cold without achieving serenity, big without dignity and singularly lacking in any suggestion of the religious spirit. It is very difficult to imagine anyone worshipping there, and a pageant would need to be singularly well stage-managed to overcome the heavy, stagnant deadness of the interior. Yet, just as in Buda, these buildings are beautiful seen at a little distance by virtue of their grouping.

Even the Gresham buildings, another great pile which faces the river, fail to spoil the beauty of the view of Pest. Though surely this house, with its mean architectural ornament and its gold mosaic, comes near to being the last expression of vulgarity. It was built by an English company, and their architect, I do not know whether he was English or not, must have soaked himself in the frothy effervescence of the Hungarian character, while he missed the gallant spirit which lies behind. I know of no architectural term which describes the building he designed. If he had done the same thing in speech instead of stone I should call it magniloquent.

After the Gresham buildings, as the eye travels southwards, comes the line of great hotels, the Duna Palota, the Hungaria and the Bristol, which look out on the river with hundreds of windows. The Duna Palota was once the Ritz, but patriotic feeling, a thing always to be reckoned with in Hungary, changed its name into "Danube Palace." Duna is Danube of course, and it is well for the wanderer to remember that the English forms of

foreign names—Danube, for instance—is often quite unknown to other people. Palota, with a long o and equally accented syllables, is palace. A taxi driver will take you to the Ritz if you ask him. The humbler coachman of a small one-horse carriage, less accustomed to foreigners, must be told to go to the Duna Palota. The meaning of Hungaria—the H is scarcely breathed, the u is round and soft like the double o in soon—is obvious enough. This hotel is a sort of centre of business life in Budapest, a place where natives and foreigners meet for the transaction of those more important affairs which can be better dealt with over cocktails than in offices. It has besides a special interest from the fact that it was the headquarters of the Bolshevik party during the disastrous months when Bela Kun and his associate Semites held sway. Budapest suffered from the war, suffered still more from the peace, suffered from the Roumanian occupation, but it suffered most of all from the Bolsheviks. Their reign left an abiding mark on the city and its life. Few are the houses, fewer still the hotels, which are not still victims of a disgusting insect, the name of which is not mentioned in polite society in England In Hungary these creatures must be talked about. Since the Bolsheviks took possession of private houses and hotels, lived and slept in places previously clean, the unfortunate Hungarian housewife has been forced to wage an unceasing war against the loathsome pests which the apostles of light and progress left behind them.

A worse legacy is the cowed spirit of the middle

classes. These people suffered so much while Bela Kun reigned that they have not yet recovered their normal courage, and still endure, with hatred in their hearts, all sorts of indignities and oppressions.

I knew an Englishman who took a flat, one of a large number of such habitations in a single building. The door and the staircase were in charge of a functionary called a "house master." He corresponds to the French concierge, but is infinitely more objectionable than any concierge, disgreeable as concierges occasionally are. The Budapest house master lives by levying blackmail on the tenants of the flats whom he treats with insolent contempt. Shortly after entering his flat my English friend received a message from his "house master," a message which was an order. He must present himself for inspection, and, I suppose, approval at the house master's apartments during the next twenty-four hours. He was also to pay the house master the sum of 20,000 crowns. The Englishman, who had paid his rent and entered upon legal possession of his flat, sent back a curt reply: "Go and be damned." He did not, because he could not, translate the words into Hungarian, but the house master understood them. So did everyone else, for the news of this incredible defiance spread rapidly through the building. The flats above, below and around the Englishman's heard of it with terrified delight. Nobody knew what would happen next, but everyone anticipated something dreadful. A number of deputations waited on the Englishman, begging him to apologize and pay up.

"But," said my friend, "what right has the man to demand——?"

"Oh, none, none."

Everyone agreed about that.

"But since the Bolshevik regime things are so, and we have to submit to them."

"But," said the Englishman, "I am not going to submit to such outrageous demands."

"If you don't," said his neighbours, "the house master will——"

"Will what?" said the Englishman. "What can he do?"

Nobody could say definitely what he would do, though everyone had tales to tell of what he had done under the Bolshevik regime. In the end the house master did nothing at all, except perhaps what the Englishman bade him in the single short message which he sent. A man of such kidney, bully and blackmailer, is pretty sure to achieve that sooner or later.

Such and so deep are the scars, entomological and moral, left by the Bolshevik regime! Hungary, after a period of semi-starvation, free murder and intolerable tyranny, escaped from her new rulers, thanks chiefly to the invincible obstinacy of her peasants. It is the Hungarian boast to-day, perhaps justifiable, that as the old Hungary stood as Europe's bulwark against the invasion of the Turks, so the new Hungary, even in the hour of her humiliation and defeat, stood between the rest of us and the invasion of a new terror, Semitic, that is to say Asiatic, just as the old scourge was.

After the Red Terror, which you must not call a Red Terror to anyone with democratic sympathies, came the White Terror. But it is not wise to mention the White Terror in the house of a Hungarian gentleman. He denies—his wife denies with actual passion—that there ever was a White Terror; just as the house master denies that there ever was a Red one. Each party, when pressed, will admit to a certain number of slightly irregular executions, entirely justifiable and quite in accordance with precedent. But as for terrors—— The Red and White Terrors are both inventions of malicious enemies.

A sort of myth has grown up in Budapest round the figure of a British naval officer who found himself in the city during the Red regime. He and his batman were quite unarmed. But even if they had owned a machine gun they could have made no stand against the whole proletariat in revolution. They are said to have strolled quietly about, interested but unmolested. When they came on anything which struck them as outrageous, the hanging of a plump bourgeois or something of the kind, they used to protest:

"I say, you fellows, that sort of thing won't do, you know. Just drop it."

The curious thing is that the executioners invariably did drop it, and afterwards, when further bidden, "hopped it off home."

The nerve of the British naval officer is famous, and a man with nerve enough can always dominate a crowd. But—I should like to think that the

stories about that naval officer are true. But the growth of myths from very tiny roots is familiar to all students of human affairs.

Hotel Duna Palota, Hotel Hungaria. Hotel —— Why should there be an Hotel Bristol in Budapest? Why should there be an Hotel Bristol in almost every great city in Europe, while Hotels London are rare, and Hotels Manchester, Liverpool or Bradford do not exist at all? Are not these cities, are not Glasgow and Belfast as worthy to be the godparents of Continental hotels as Bristol is? The only explanation of this curious fact which I have ever heard does not strike me as very satisfactory. There was at the end of the eighteenth century an Earl of Bristol who was also Bishop of Derry. He delighted greatly in foreign travel and always made his tours in the grand style, with fine coaches, many horses, outriders, courier, cooks, valets and—all such things. He was the starting figure of the great myth of the English "Milor," incredibly rich, generous, over-bearing, spectacular. Hotel keepers who desired to attract this kind of client—in their opinion the most desirable of all—called their houses after the greatest of all "Milors," the original, the ideal. But could any one man, even an eighteenth-century English earl, even the English holder of an Irish see, have succeeded in impressing his personality on a whole continent to this extent? Two, or three, or even half a dozen Hotels Bristol one could understand. But why is there one everywhere?

The long range of buildings on the flat Pest side

of the river is broken by squares. The Vigado Tér, with its pretty garden and handsome grey building behind, and the Petőfi Tér, lower down than the last of the hotels, an open space less well kept than most of such spaces in Budapest, but adorned with a statue of Petőfi.

The wanderer, if he means to associate with Hungarians, ought to find out before he goes to Budapest who Petőfi was. His own people hold him in high esteem and are perpetually getting up festivals in his honour. Flags are flown, bands play, processions march, his statue is decorated, speeches are made about him, and his poems—yes, he was a poet—are recited and sung. And a Petőfi celebration is not merely an affair of a handful of literati. I can scarcely imagine the English people getting up pageants of this kind about Wordsworth, or even the Americans about Ella Wheeler Wilcox. But the Hungarians are fond of these shows. When they run out of poets of their own they take on other peoples'. They got up a centenary for Shelley—a year late. Everything in Hungary is late—but whole-hearted. There was a lecture by a Professor who explained Shelley's philosophy. There was an exposition of the spirit of his poetry by a young woman who danced about the stage without any musical encouragement, her bare legs blue with cold, while someone in a corner recited the "Ode to the West Wind" in Hungarian. There were several songs sung which had nothing on earth to do with Shelley. The whole audience, a large one, enjoyed itself thoroughly and went

home with a pleasurable sense of having done fitting honour to a great poet.

The Petőfi celebrations are, of course, much finer affairs, and no doubt it is a credit to any people to take delight in honouring great literary men. But a doubt insinuates itself into the mind of the foreign observer. Petőfi was a great poet—I take other people's word for that—but is he honoured for the sake of his poetry or his patriotism? He was patriot too, one of the patriots of the Kossuth time. His best songs are calls to arms, and he laid down his life fighting very gallantly against the Austrians and Russians. They call him the Tyrtaeus of Hungary, and no doubt he deserves the title. He inspired, and still inspires, the youth of his country with the fieriest emotion.

> Arise, oh Magyar! Thy country calls.
> Here is the time. Now or never.
> Shall we be slaves or free?
> That is the question. Choose.
> We swear by the God of the Magyars,
> We swear to be slaves no longer.

Patriotic enough and stirring, but—— Of course a literal translation is unfair to a poet. We cannot judge.

There is an English translation of Petőfi's poems by Sir John Bowring which was published in 1866, but I am told it does not do justice to the poet. A short monograph on Petőfi was published in Budapest, but in English, by Professor Arthur Yolland, who gives some short translations. The following lines give us some idea of a genuinely

poetic thought, though we cannot even guess the form in which the poet expressed it.

Why do I laugh ?
Sure I should weep,
Weep for the evil done in the world.
Even God with His closed eyes
Oft weeps that He created it.
But what avail the tears of heaven ?
They fall to earth, the filthy earth,
Where men upon them stamp ;
And what becomes of them ?
Of heaven's tears ? . . . Why, mud.

CHAPTER VII

BUDAPEST

THE wanderer, having arrived by the steamer from Vienna, goes in all likelihood to one of the large hotels on the Pest side of the Danube. There he dines, remembering, if he knows it, that you cannot dine before 8.30 p.m. in Hungary, and that it is better to dine later. At seven or half-past, nothing is ready for you. The waiters are still laying the tables. The room is half lit. The food is half cooked. Probably the dining-room is still occupied by those who linger over their afternoon tea and the cigarettes which followed it—are still lingering at half-past seven. A self-respecting head waiter, if you ask him for a table for some little dinner-party, will beg you to put off your meal till a quarter to nine at the earliest. Before that he cannot do himself or his cook justice.

But when you do get dinner—being by that time very hungry indeed—it is good. Hungarian cookery is excellent. If it errs at all it errs on the side of over-richness, and of course the national passion for paprika has to be reckoned with. Paprika is a kind of sweet red pepper, not nearly so violently hot as the kind we use at home. The Hungarians like to mix it with everything they eat, except

sweets, though with some sweets I think it might be agreeably used. Waiters are usually careful to warn strangers, especially English people, against dishes very highly dosed with paprika; but it is a mistake to avoid it altogether. Almost anyone will like an occasional dish cooked with paprika, and the novelty of the flavour makes it delightful so long as it is a novelty. And Hungary is a country of excellent wines. Tokay is famous all over the world, but it is an after-dinner wine, sweet and strong. The very best Tokay is difficult to obtain. The owners refuse to part with it; evidently agreeing with Omar Kayyám about the value of good wine.

> I often wonder what the vintners buy
> One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

But an excellent Tokay, quite good enough to enable one to appreciate the wine, can be had at any good restaurant.

Of the wines which one drinks with one's food, the best are the white. Hungarian red wine, for some reason unknown to me, is seldom very good. But there are excellent white wines, a Muscatel of which everyone who drinks it will have pleasant memories, and a wine called Syklabor. Bor means wine, and Sör (pronounced shur) means beer, which is good but light in Hungary. These Hungarian white wines are almost, if not quite, unknown in England, which is a pity. I am told that they travel badly, losing most of their flavour and sometimes turning sour. But it ought to be possible to

get over this difficulty, and it would certainly be to our advantage to have these wines accessible. It would also, no doubt, be to the advantage of Hungary to establish a brisk export trade in wine. The "Balance of Trade" is one of the worst fiends which haunt the path of Hungarian finance Ministers.

While he dines the traveller will listen—whether he wants to or not—to the music of one of the Tzigani bands. Every stranger who comes to Budapest at once asks to be taken to hear a Tzigani band. There is no difficulty about gratifying his wish, none at all. After a month in Budapest he asks, in a kind of pathetic bleat, to be taken to dine in some place where there is no Tzigani band. That no one can do for him. Unless you dine in your bedroom—the plan I always adopted—you must listen to a Tzigani band. Nor is it the slightest use trying to avoid the full rigour of the experience by seeking a remote corner of the restaurant. No corner is remote enough to escape the noise.

Everybody likes it at first. The strange wailing of the violins, the insistent undercurrent of sound from a broad instrument whose strings are beaten with little hammers, and the untrammelled wildness of the whole effect, fascinate the listener. After a week or two he is less fascinated. At the end of a month he hates this music with a passionate intensity. If he is honest he says so. But many people are not honest, and the Hungarians themselves keep up the fiction that these gipsies' uproar is great and good. I do not believe they really think this.

A HUNGARIAN PAPEIKA WORKER PRESENTING HIS SWEETHEART WITH AN EASTER GIFT– A HUGE CAKE IN THE FORM OF A HEART AND A TRUE LOVER'S KNOT

BELFAST PUBLIC LIBRARY
OLDPARK ROAD BRANCH

Whether you still like it or not you must contribute to the support of the band by dropping a note for a thousand crowns or so into the plate which stands near the first violin. Be careful not to tip too lavishly. If you do, the leader of the band will watch for you next night, and when you sit down at your table will come over to you, stand beside you and play his violin into your ear. This is his way of showing gratitude. In some restaurants the plate for contributions is carried round by a member of the band, as a collecting-bag is in church. No gipsy trusts another gipsy, or indeed anyone else, so the man who bears the plate is made to carry a live fly in his hand—the plate in one hand the fly in the other. When he returns with his spoil he must open the hand with the fly in it. If the insect is still there it is a proof that he has not used the hand to abstract notes while on his way round the tables. Then everyone is satisfied. If the fly is not there—— I do not know what is done to a man whose fly escapes. Perhaps the other musicians combine and play to him until he dies.

While lavishness is a mistake in one direction, it does not do to try to revenge yourself on the band by not tipping at all. Your life is made very unpleasant for you if you do that. I knew one man—a very strong-willed Greek gentleman—who told the band in his hotel that he would tip them only on the evenings on which they did not play. He held to his word, being strengthened in his resolve by his sufferings from the music night after

night. Being themselves pagans, the gipsy musicians do not play on Good Friday, out of respect for the religious feelings of their clients, who are mostly Jews. On that day the whole band came to my friend, the Greek gentleman, and demanded an enormous tip. He paid up, I think willingly. It was worth a lot to him to be able to dine one night in the year without gipsy music, and being a Greek he was able to dine well. His calendar is differently arranged, and his worst fast days were still some way ahead of him.

Gipsy bandsmen are not the only people in Budapest who expect to be tipped. In fact there is only one class which does not—I will not say expect, but insist on being tipped. A pre-war Baedeker in my possession has this note in a paragraph about trams. "No fee to conductor." That means that no fee is necessary, but a tram conductor rather expects to be allowed to keep any small change that may be due to a passenger. Everyone else must be tipped. The amounts are small, but the thing is a nuisance. If a shop sends home a parcel for you and you happen to be out when the messenger arrives, he sits on your doorstep with the parcel on his knee—sits there for three hours if necessary—until you get back and give him what he expects, a tip amounting in value to an English halfpenny. If you call on a friend, the servant who opens the door to you must be tipped. If you draw money from a bank, the notes are not handed to you across the counter by the gentleman who is eating a sandwich or smoking a cigarette

there. They are fetched for you from some remote part of the building, a vault perhaps, by a special messenger, and he expects to be tipped. Such people as lift men, housemaids and waiters who are tipped everywhere, must of course be tipped in Budapest, but the weariness of the business is greatly aggravated there. You are waited on during a meal by perhaps five or six different people, including a boy who does nothing but pour soda-water into your glass when you do not want it. When your bill comes you calculate, as you do everywhere else in the world, what ten per cent. of the total comes to. But instead of handing that sum, whatever it is, three-pence halfpenny perhaps, since food is, or was recently cheap in Hungary, to the man who brings you the bill, you must divide it between the five or six servants who have hovered round you, and you must give each his proper proportion. A Hungarian does that sort of sum and deals with such a situation easily and quickly. Few Englishmen can do it at all, especially after dining well and drinking a bottle of Hungarian wine.

Some of the more cosmopolitan restaurants, that of the Dunapalota, for instance, and the Hungaria, have discarded this system, and the waiters are content to pool their three-pence halfpennies, and divide them among themselves afterwards. But in most restaurants the system prevails.

Having dined, listened to the gipsy band and tipped everyone he has met, the wise traveller goes to bed and wakes next morning eager to

explore Budapest. After an utterly insufficient breakfast he steps out of his hotel. If he is staying, as is likely, in the Hungaria, the Dunapalota or the Bristol, he steps straight on to the Ferenz-József-Rakpart, the most fashionable promenade in Budapest. Wheeled vehicles are not allowed to drive along this rakpart, so foot passengers have the whole of it to themselves. Save for one thing, it is a beautiful and splendid promenade. A tram line has been laid between it and the river, which prevents direct access to the quays, creates a very unpleasant noise, and to some extent interferes with the magnificent view of the Danube and the hills of Buda on the opposite side. In every other way this promenade is the best I have ever seen. It is planted with graceful acacia-trees and well provided with seats and chairs. All along the shoreward side are rows of coffee houses, resorts very dear to the Hungarian bourgeoisie. In them, practically in the open air in summer, much overwarmed in winter, a man may sit for hours, may read all the current newspapers, may smoke and talk politics, at no greater expense than the price of a cup of coffee. Along with this the generous management of these places provides free two tumblers of cold water.

The people of Budapest take full advantage of this promenade. On fine Sundays in early summer, or high days and holy days, swarms of people, men, women and children, all dressed in their best clothes, meander slowly up and down, gently and smilingly elbow each other aside, until the time

comes for resting in the chairs. There they sit and watch other men, women and children meandering slowly up and down dressed in their best clothes. The scene is extraordinarily gay and pleasant. Hungarian women, especially the Jewesses, have a daring taste in dress, both in their own dress and their children's. Even the men are not afraid of colour. Everybody seems to be in a placidly good temper. In the old days before the war the scene must have been much gayer. The whole country was prosperous and the bourgeoisie of Pest could afford to buy not only gay, but good clothes, now, alas, beyond the reach of any but the longest purses. Then, I am assured, faces were bright and eyes sparkled. Now there is an indefinable air of defeat. A proud people has been beaten in its own favourite sport of war. Everyone is poor instead of prosperous. The country is small and robbed of its richest provinces. The future is dark and the present hard.

There are people, who, like steel, are toughened by the blows of adversity, tempered by its fire, whose spirit rises with defeat. Perhaps the Hungarians are of this fine kind. I think that outside Budapest, their one great city, they still are, as they have always been during the worst periods of their history, uncrushed by their misfortunes. But in Budapest there is an atmosphere of gloom, a settled sense of dilapidation. It is true that the door of every house bears a small metal plate with these words on it, "Nem, nem soha" (No, no never will we submit to the degradation of our country).

And in every tramcar is displayed a copy of that curiously virile creed, of post-war Hungary.

Hiszek egy Istenben, hiszek egy Hazában,
Hiszek egy isteni őrök igazságbar—
Hiszek Magyarország feltámadasaban—Amen.

I believe in one God. I believe in one Fatherland.
I believe in one divine hour coming.
I believe in the resurrection of Hungary. Amen.

Perhaps it is the result of the intermixture of alien blood in this cosmopolitan city. Perhaps the slow pressure of poverty has done what the battering of enemy guns failed to effect. Whatever the reason is, it seems to me that in Budapest at least the fire of patriotic fervour which blazed so fiercely five years ago is only smouldering now. People have lost heart and hope. Such at least is the effect produced on the mind of a stranger by a walk along the Ferenz-József-Rakpart on a fine Sunday.

Here are people who ought to be gay. They are mildly sombre. Here are people made for prosperity. They are terribly poor. People on whom the sun ought always to shine, as it ought always to shine on little children. They are passing through a valley of shadow—of death ? One hopes not that.

The people are poor ; but in Budapest more than in most places we are struck by the contrast between extreme wealth and extreme poverty. Through the shabby streets of this once well-kept capital, roll great motors, and in them men and women very richly dressed and wrapped in furs. Where there

are people with the unmistakable mark of actual hunger on their faces, there are also shops full of all sorts of costly things—jewels, delicate fabrics, works of art. Where the pinched misery of an impoverished middle class exists in all its worst sordidness, there exists also an unrestrained luxury, disgusting in its fleshliness. Who owns the motor-cars, buys the jewels and the silk, pays the masseurs to stroke back over-pampered bodies into temporary ease? Some class, some race, some kind of men, has been making money out of Hungary's poverty; like the camp followers of armies of old, has been wandering over a stricken field, gathering spoils from the bodies of the wounded and the dead.

The Hungarians have no doubt who their spoilers are. Their hatred of the Jews is bitter, intense, amazing. The stranger, listening to what they say, smiles, for to us the *Juden-hass* seems absurd. We gasp, for its violence takes our breath away, but finally we half believe.

The Jews hold the secret of making money out of falling currencies, of wringing fortunes for themselves out of every delirium of speculation which marks the steps of commercial disaster. I have been told by a man who knows Europe well, that exactly the same faces—not only men with similar faces but the very identical men—were to be seen in the Adlon Hotel in Berlin, in the Bristol Hotel in Vienna, and in the Dunapalota in Budapest during the periods of rapid fall of mark and crown. Always they were faring sumptuously. Always by some means they were amassing huge sums of

money. The Hungarians, a people almost totally without business capacity, are like captive birds in the hands of such men. They flutter feebly, utter shrill little cries of terror and hate, peck with their beaks, and are held fast.

The aristocracy, that part of it which is secure in the possession of large estates of fertile land, holds proudly aloof. It will have no part, no dealing, no intermingling with this new plutocracy. And hitherto the Hungarian aristocracy has escaped being despoiled because it holds control of the means of creating food, and no financial jugglery can get behind the fact that wheat grows in a field and not on the floor of a Bourse. But everybody else, functionaries of state—those holders of Government jobs once so dear to the heart of the Hungarians—men of science, scholarship, literature; professors, lawyers, merchants, where any Hungarian merchants survive, all the whole class of clerks and managers, working men, skilled or unskilled, all alike are conscious that they are growing poorer and poorer, through no apparent fault of their own, and that all riches are being piled up in the laps of aliens; absurdly and preposterously poured into hands which never, it seems, did anything but stretch out with opened palms.

CHAPTER VIII

BUDAPEST

SOONER or later the wayfarer, tired of Ferenz-József-Rakpart and looking at the statue of Petőfi, wants to cross the river into Buda. He should do so by a ferry boat rather than by one of the four bridges. For this reason: the bridges are well worth seeing, and you cannot see a bridge when you are on it. The ferry boats are cheap, comfortable, and run often enough to satisfy any reasonable man.

There are four bridges over which people go, besides two railway bridges which are neither beautiful nor interesting, but, fortunately, are little seen. The Margit Hid (Hid is the Hungarian for a bridge) is the longest of the four and farthest upstream. The middle of it rests on the southern corner of Margaret Island, and the whole structure forms an obtuse angle. It is a fine bridge, but not, as the two below it are, strikingly beautiful.

Margaret Island, which is reached by this bridge, is a place which the wanderer will visit sooner or later. It is Budapest's chief pleasure park, and is well equipped with restaurants, bands, lawn tennis courts, boat clubs and bathing-places, above all bathing-places. At the north end of the island

near the principal hotel, is a great bath house where the sufferers from all the diseases which used to be called by the single name of rheumatism can try various experiments with highly mineralized waters and, if they want to, mineralized mud. Masseurs and masseuses abound. The appointments of the place are of the very best, and anyone who likes soaking himself to the point of lassitude in hot water can enjoy himself for hours at a time. But it is well to be warned. There really is something potent about the water here and elsewhere in Budapest. Whether it cures rheumatism or not I do not know. It certainly induces a slackness, a complete prostration, which I have experienced nowhere else. The effect of the mud is even more drastic. You lie down on a waterproof sheet and the stuff is plastered over you, hot from the bowels of the earth, by an attendant who knows his job. You are then swathed in sheets—you and the mud together—so that you cannot move hand or foot. You feel that there is nothing left except to die, a painless, rather pleasant, warm death. But you do not actually die. You are released in due time, washed and stretched out to cool. Then and afterwards the lassitude comes on you. After a bath in the healing mud of the Margaret Island, the Lukacs Fürdő, or elsewhere in Budapest, there is nothing for it but to sleep, or lie supine, for the rest of the day. After a mud bath you sleep for a day and a half and are awakened with difficulty to take food.

But there is bathing of another sort on Margaret Island. On the west side of the island is a huge

open-air swimming-bath. I visited it for the first time on a hot day in early summer. When I went to buy the ticket which would entitle me to a bathing-box, a towel and several other things, I was asked whether I wanted to take the box for the whole day or only half the day. My idea had been an hour, or perhaps since the day was warm, an hour and a half. But the Hungarians do not bathe in that half-hearted way. No one, it appeared, goes swimming for less than half a day.

The box, one of an immense number all in one building, was most comfortably fitted up. When I left it I strolled down to the bath over coarse yellow sand, very pleasant for bare feet if it had not been a little too hot. The water looked cool. I plunged in and experienced a shock of surprise. It was warm. I struck out for the centre of the bath. The water became warmer, became actually hot. I understood how Hungarians managed to spend the whole day in it. The bath is an immense hollow dug out of the sand, and the water flows into it, hot, from springs underneath. It is nowhere very deep. I did not succeed in getting out of my depth, but it is quite deep enough to swim in and to take headers.

Here, apparently from morning till night, men and women beautifully arrayed in the most fashionable, also in the scantiest of bathing-dresses, swim about. When they are tired of swimming they come ashore and lie on the hot sand or recline in hammock chairs. They smoke, chat, flirt, and aim at getting as much of their bodies as possible tanned brown.

When they are hungry they eat—and drink—at a restaurant beside the bath. I did not try the restaurant because I had not brought any money into the bath with me. I did not find out, though I tried, how the Hungarians carry their money while bathing. Coins are unknown and notes would soon be pulp if carried in the hand or the pocket of a bathing-dress while swimming. But about one point I am clear. They do not obtain their meals at the restaurant on credit. No one in Hungary will give credit for a shilling, even to a well-known millionaire. This is not because the millionaire is untrustworthy, but because, so rapid are the changes in the value of the currency, the shilling might not be worth a shilling, might not be worth more than sixpence a few hours later when the millionaire came to pay his bill.

Budapest is extraordinarily rich in hot springs, and I cannot help feeling that if her natural advantages in this way were properly advertised they might be a source of enormous revenue. Doctors and hotel keepers ought to combine for the purpose of booming these hot springs. Whether the water, swallowed or wallowed in, really cures anything it is not necessary to inquire. If a sufficient number of eminent medical men assert with sufficient vigour that it does, then no doubt a considerable number of people would be cured, or—what comes to the same thing—believe that they were cured. Round the walls of the Lukacz baths on the Buda side of the river and particularly rich both in mud and rather smelly sulphurous water, there are tablets

set up by those who left their crutches behind them when they emerged from the bath. Doctors ought to be alive to the possibilities which such testimonials offer them. If they are not careful the ecclesiastics will step in. They, nowadays, seem in every country to be awakening to the possibilities of healing. They might very well present the Budapest baths to the world as modern pools of Siloam.

But whether it is the doctors or the priests who first leap at the splendid chance, hotel keepers ought to be ready to take their part. At present hotel accommodation is lamentably insufficient in Budapest, and for those who greatly dislike the insect legacy of Bolshevism, suitable beds are often hard to find. Yet no one will come to be healed—at least no great number of people will—unless they can be reasonably comfortable while the business is going on. Neither chemical analysis nor Te Deums will reconcile the mass of mankind to bad dinners and insects in bed. Until there is a sufficiency of satisfactory food and clean accommodation, the multitudes who might flock to the hot springs of Budapest will remain at home, enduring their arthritis as best they can.

I have wandered a long way from the view of the Margit Hid. But this is a casual guide-book, and it is only fair that the writer should be allowed to be discursive when the reader is avowedly one who delights in wandering. And, after all, there is some excuse. The traveller, desirous to cross the river and view the bridges as he does so, might

very easily get into the wrong ferry boat, one which would take him to the landing-place on the Margaret Island, instead of straight across the river. If that happened—and it very well might in a country where not one foreigner in a hundred can understand what is said to him—then the traveller will be glad enough to read a little about the island and its baths before he goes back to the right ferry boat and gets the views he ought to get of the remaining bridges.

The Lancz Hid (Chain Bridge) is next below the Margit Hid and the oldest of the Budapest bridges. It was constructed by two English engineers whose names are recorded on tablets on the bridge itself. The building and opening of this bridge were, naturally enough, important events. Pictures survive and were shown at a Loan Exhibition in 1923 of the bridge in building and the opening ceremony. One of them interested me greatly. It represented Adam Clark, one of the English engineers, sailing about the Danube in a small gig-like boat with a sprit sail. From the end of the sprit an enormous Union Jack, wrongly depicted, blows out. Adam Clark, with an expression of extreme satisfaction on his face, sits at the tiller. Either that is an entirely fancy picture or the Danube has changed its habits since 1845. The current is far too strong for small boat sailing now.

Adam Clark, whether he sailed or not, had every right to be pleased with himself. He constructed a bridge which is not only strong and imposing but beautiful. Whether the river is running low in

A GENERAL VIEW OF PEST ACROSS THE DANUBE, SHOWING THE CHAIN BRIDGE

early autumn or rushing in springtime flood between the two great piers or frozen into hummocky ice, the bridge gives the same impression of being a gracious structure.

Below the Lancz Hid is the Erzébet Hid (Elizabeth Bridge), which crosses the river in one magnificent span of 317 yards. The Hungarians say that this is the longest single span of any bridge in the world. This may be true. I have no figures at hand to tell whether it is or not. But experience of the claims of local patriotism renders me cautious about accepting any statement of this kind. Whether any other bridge excells it in length or span or not, the Erzébet Hid must rank high as a feat of engineering. Like the Lancz Hid, it certainly ranks high among bridges for its beauty. The eye rests with singular pleasure on the long, graceful curve downwards and then upwards of its supporting chains, and the restrained upward and then downward curve of the roadway along which the traffic goes. The curves of the chain are as graceful as the swooping of a tern which touches the water and swiftly rises again. The arc of the roadway seems to suggest a reaching upward for support, in fear of the water underneath, and the sinking back again when the central danger point is past and the firm land of the farther bank comes nearer and nearer. The whole structure must be, I suppose, the result of careful calculation of strains and thrusts. It is interesting that the solution of a mathematical problem should have resulted in a structure of such outstanding beauty.

The bridge is called after the unfortunate Empress Elizabeth, who was assassinated in 1898, the only Austrian monarch who achieved popularity in Hungary since Maria Theresa. In 1857, while the country was still plunged in the misery and poverty which followed the war of independence, the Empress showed herself to be a gracious and tender lady, winning the hearts of the Hungarians. Her death was an occasion of genuine sorrow and her memory is preserved, not only by the name of this great bridge, but by a striking tower built in her honour on one of the hills behind Buda.

This tower, which curiously enough is scarcely mentioned in guide-books, is worth visiting, both because the way to it goes through some of the best scenery of the hills, and because the view from the tower itself when you get there is very fine. In the foreground are the hills, tree-covered, dotted with villas, which here, as elsewhere in Hungary, seem to have been designed and placed by someone with singularly good taste in landscape gardening. Below and beyond is the city, its spires and towers half shrouded in a smoky mist. The great river, shining even through the mist, seems to push the two sides of the city apart, while the bridges, taut stretched bands, hold and pull them together. North and south are the broad winding reaches of the river, which twist and turn, gently embracing long, flat islands, spreading beyond the islands in calm broadness. Beyond all, behind Pest, stretches unbroken the great plain, whose very flatness makes it a land of mystery.

Below the Erzébet Hid is the Ferenz-József-Hid, the last of the four bridges, which carries the traffic between Buda and Pest. In any other city this would be accounted a fine bridge, but here, in contrast with the Erzébet Hid and the Lancz Hid, it seems a commonplace affair. It is strong and stable no doubt, and is not without a certain dignity. But it lacks altogether the note of graciousness, the sense of inspired flight of the bridges above it. Perhaps these two bridges are more fitly named than their builders guessed. There seems to have been just the same contrast between the old Emperor and the lady who was never really happy in his Court.

CHAPTER IX

BUDA

BUDAPEST—even Buda, which is the older part of the twin city—is singularly lacking in buildings of historic interest, even of architectural interest or beauty. The wanderer will not expect to find in Budapest a rival of Vienna, much less of Paris or Rome. But it is a little disappointing to discover that it cannot be regarded even as a serious rival of Prague in the historic and architectural interest of its buildings. There is no church in Buda to compare in interest with the Tyn Church in Prague. There are no cross-engraved stones in the Buda main squares to mark the memory of national martyrs; no scene of a Defenestration, no ancient Jewish Synagogue. Men and women of note, whose lives are full of high romance, no doubt walked about Buda in the old days, but they left no marks of their footsteps behind them as John Huss did in Prague; nor can we catch in Buda the scent of the garments of great ladies as we do in Prague, where the unfortunate Winter Queen left a memory behind her.

The Bohemian nobles were no greater men than the Magnates of Hungary, but they left a town across the Moldau full of palaces, every doorway, every balcony, every façade of which have their enticing

interest; buildings which set our imaginations wandering until we can almost see and hear the ghosts of old strong, passionate, lawless men go striding through the saloons of these great houses of theirs. The Hungarian Magnates left no such houses behind them. There is scarcely one of the old palaces on the Buda hill which rises above the level of the home of a well-to-do merchant. You look at them, wander through their gateways and into the courtyards round which they are built, without catching a breath of romance or a suggestion that great people lived there. The explanation of this barrenness lies in the fact of the Turkish occupation of the city, which lasted for a hundred years. The Turks, unlike their brethren the Moors in Spain, built nothing. They destroyed what they found and did not put anything in its place. When they spared a building for their own use, as they spared the Coronation Church in Buda which they turned into a Mosque, they suffered it to fall into such decay that a complete—from the antiquary's point of view a drastic—restoration became necessary. This Coronation Church was begun by King Bela IV in the thirteenth century and completed in another style two hundred years later. It was the scene of some, though not very many, events of historical interest and importance. It contains in a chapel on the north side the tomb of King Bela III. Its interior is badly lighted, but is painted in colours which, if you could only see them properly, would be brilliant. Like most Hungarian churches, it is lacking in that devotional atmosphere which else-

where so often impresses a visitor even if he happens to be out of sympathy with the particular kind of Christianity practised there or with any kind of Christianity. Perhaps the Hungarians, though their first dynasty added four saints to the calendar—surely a record for a royal family—are not a praying people. The wanderer who knows Austria will be struck, painfully or pleasantly according to his own temperament, with the absence of popular devotion, acts of piety of simple people, when he comes to Hungary. The Coronation Church and the Cathedral of St. Stephen in Pest are as empty of worshippers when there is no service going on as an English dissenting chapel is.

The head of the clergy who serve the Coronation Church is a bishop, whose position is so odd and anomalous that it deserves a word of explanation. When Pope Sylvester II granted to King Stephen the title of Apostolic King, he gave him also the right of appointing, subject presumably to some papal veto, the bishops in his kingdom. The right inhered in the Hungarian Crown, and was regularly exercised as long as there was a king of Hungary. Whether it can be exercised by the present Regent, as representative of a king still only hoped for, is a question about which I can imagine that there might be acrimonious controversy. At all events the right was admitted up to the time of the abdication of the Emperor Charles. But the kingdom of Hungary was at one time much larger than it was during the reign of the Emperor Francis Joseph. King Matthias, for instance, exercised

THE BASTION, UNDER THE CORONATION CHURCH, BUDAPEST

jurisdiction over a good deal of what was afterwards Serbia and Montenegro. In virtue of his position as Apostolic King he appointed bishops to sees which later on ceased to belong to the kingdom of Hungary.

It was plainly highly inconvenient, indeed impossible, that a Hungarian king should appoint a bishop to a see in somebody else's country, and the actual, so to speak, working bishops of these sees were appointed in the ordinary way from Rome. But the kings of Hungary still claimed some sort of *de jure* jurisdiction, just as the English kings called themselves kings of France for a time, although they had not the slightest intention of claiming any real power. By way of asserting their claim the Hungarian kings continued to nominate bishops for sees in parts of the country which had been long lost to them. But there cannot be two bishops—at least there cannot be two bishops of the same church—in one place. So Rome refused to confer by consecration the spiritual powers of a bishop on the nominees of the Hungarian Crown. In the eyes of ecclesiastical authority these men were still simply priests. From the Hungarian point of view they were bishops entitled to such precedence in the State and such honour as civil law confers on the holders of episcopal office. A priest may thus be the titular bishop of a see quite remote from Hungary, a place which very likely he has never visited and never means to. In Hungary, so far as the State is concerned, he is a bishop and is recognized as such. Outside Hungary, if he pays a visit to Rome for instance, he is not a bishop.

Neither in Hungary nor anywhere else can he, nor does he, attempt to exercise powers *in spiritualibus.*

I do not know how many of these non-episcopal bishops there are in Hungary now, or whether any of them will survive in the future, but the wanderer who attends High Mass in the Coronation Church will see one of them, a dignified and courtly ecclesiastic, pontificating in all the glory of what is not his office anywhere else.

Supposing that the wanderer, under this devious guidance, has succeeded in getting to the Coronation Church, he will certainly want to stray about the streets of Buda. I quote for his benefit another passage from the brilliant pages of *Quand Israel est Roi.*

"This morning I took a walk through the ancient city of Buda. It is not so long ago since I used to climb up there to gaze on the exquisite landscape which is to be seen from the heights, a vast semicircle of wooded hills, a sheet of discoloured Danube water which flows at the foot of these rocks, beyond it on the flat land of the farther side the new town of Pest, and then the plain reaching backwards into infinity.

"When I came here twenty years ago this city of Buda was no more than a little old town, wholly provincial in character, its little low houses covered with a strange yellow plaster. In Buda the palace of the Magnate was no more than a simple house with a countrified air, where only the porch and the escutcheon show any influence of art. The Habsburgs did nothing to glorify this ancient hill. Maria

Theresa, who built so much elsewhere, built nothing here except a dull palace, on the ruins of which was raised, later on, a new Royal Palace, as pompous and showy as one of our "Palace" hotels. As for the Magyar nobles, they were attracted to the Court at Vienna. It was there that they built fine residences for themselves, resting content with modest houses in Budapest, lodgings sufficient for their accommodation during the rare visits of the Royal family to Hungary.

"Here and there, half covered by the yellow plaster, which covers these low houses, there might be found some stone, built into the wall, on which a Turk's head is carved, or perhaps an inscription of some such kind as this: 'Here in 1450 dwelt the Ruler of Bosnia,' or 'Here in 1388 was built the Palace of the Regent of the Banat,' or of this or that other Balkan Prince. You pass through a porch wide enough to admit the passage of a carriage and pair. You enter a roughly paved courtyard where the grass is growing between the stones, where there is a well in the corner, where all round you are buildings with old tiled roofs, which look as if they were tumbling down. All that remains now of the Regent of the Banat or the 'Hospodar' of Wallachia is a fragment of a rounded arch, a cellar, or a pillar over which climbs a vine, where a canary's cage is hanging. Among these relics of the past modest pensioners, retired civil servants, and artisans live peaceable lives. But the Turk's head, the arch, the pillar, are enough to move the imagination and to remind us that on this hill, given over

to-day to a minor bourgeoisie, great things once happened."

This, as M. Tharaud says, is a description of Buda twenty years ago. Since then Buda has changed—sadly changed, I think. The low yellow houses with their grass-grown courtyards are still to be found, but the wanderer must search for them. The Turks' heads, the old arches, and so forth are becoming rarer and rarer. The place has been "improved" out of recognition. A quarter of a century or so ago, during the period of millennial prosperity, a passion for building and rebuilding took possession of the Hungarians. They were conscious that their chief city was provincial. They were determined that it should be a capital. They pulled down ruthlessly. They rebuilt grandly or grandiosely. Sentimental interest was sacrificed. Dignity was occasionally achieved, but for the most part—one hesitates to say it, but the general effect is that of swagger. Then prosperity vanished. The spirit of ostentation died away during the miseries which followed the war, and of all possible things shabby swagger is the least attractive. Decay might have laid light fingers on the old provincial Buda, touching tenderly the yellow-plastered houses, ruined arches and ancient wells. The loss of prosperity has tarnished the gilt of the new buildings, which never had much but their swagger to recommend them

I think that the spirit at work in Budapest during the period of building was German ; and if the city had achieved the destiny its citizens desired for it, it would have become another and a second-rate

Berlin. A Sieges-Allee was never attempted, but it very well might have been. Such a monstrosity would have been quite in keeping with the spirit of that time in Hungary. But Budapest, even if its prosperity had continued, could never have been quite as bad as Berlin. Its situation would always have saved it—the Buda hills and the great river.

Wherever else the Hungarian city architects failed, they made no mistake in dealing with their river. I have already written of the fineness of the bridges and the wonderful beauty of the grouping of the buildings on each side. The treatment of the actual banks of the river is amazingly good. Nowhere in London has the Thames been so nobly built in. There is nothing in Paris to compare with the Rakparts, quays, embankments on each side of the river in Budapest. Long straight lines of shallow steps rise from the water's edge, the lowest steps, the higher steps, sometimes the topmost steps washed by the river in its emptiness or fullness. Above the steps are broad quays. Above them generally other long flights of steps and then the main roadways. These steps, the prolonged unbroken line of them, are curiously impressive. If anything could add to the natural dignity of a great river like the Danube it would be such building as this. But perhaps the Danube is beyond and above the help of man. It is no small praise to say of man's work on the banks that it is not unworthy of the river

CHAPTER X

FLAT LIFE

THE passion for building which possessed Budapest at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century was not entirely due to a desire for display. The city was growing rapidly, and there was urgent need of more accommodation for the citizens. It was no longer possible to afford space for the low houses, with their yellow-plastered walls. These had to give way to huge piles of buildings which could conveniently be divided into flats. The civilization of Budapest to-day is that of the flat, not of the house. This is possible only when a people is capable of being disciplined. Dwellers in flats must of necessity be less free than those who have whole houses to themselves. They must submit to rules, otherwise the lives of their neighbours would be intolerable.

Take, for instance, the question of beating beds and carpets—a very urgent question in Budapest. The English housewife gets through life with very little beating of carpets, and so far as I know never beats beds at all. The Hungarian beats every carpet she possesses and every bed in her house every day. She keeps a little instrument expressly designed to make as much noise as possible during

the work. She and her maids—the Hungarian maid-servant is a most muscular woman—beat with all their might. Since the flats are built five or six on top of each other, round a central courtyard which acts as an enormous sounding-board, the noise while the beating is going on is terrific.

All Hungarians like noise—hence the gipsy bands, the opera, and the innumerable concerts. But not even a Hungarian can stand the carpet and bed-beating in the courtyard of a block of flats for very long; therefore rules are made which differ slightly in each block of flats, confining the beaters to the hours between 8 and 10 a.m. Everybody, since the people are susceptible of discipline, submits loyally, and the noise of beating, which is something like the noise of an active battle fought with machine-guns and small cannons in an enclosed space, ceases abruptly when the nearest clock strikes ten.

Why Hungarians insist on beating their household possessions as they do I have tried but failed to find out. What they say is that beds and carpets, particularly beds, are not clean unless they are beaten every day—the mattresses, palliasses, blankets, coverlets, pillows, bolsters, every part of them. If you point out that the English—admittedly a fairly clean people—do not beat their beds, or at all events not to the same extent, the Hungarian woman looks puzzled, just as she would if you told her that Englishmen keep their hands clean without washing them. In the end, after thinking the thing over, she believes that you are deceiving her

about the habits of Englishwomen, and that they do beat their beds, just as she does, every day. I used to think that the necessity for this perpetual beating was one of the legacies of the Bolshevik regime, since beating, vigorous and sustained, may be the only way of getting rid of the insects and the eggs of the insects which are apparently the only living things which flourish under the system of Semitic Communism. I am glad I got rid of that idea, for it used to fill me with horror when I thought of all that might be shaken loose in the confined air, all that I was breathing, all that was floating in through the windows of my flat while the beating was going on. The Hungarian women used to beat their beds in exactly the same way before Bela Kun established the New Jerusalem in Budapest. I can only suppose that they do it because they like it. That, after all, is the reason why we do most of the things we do, from smoking pipes to dressing for dinner.

Another matter in which the flat-dweller in Budapest must submit to discipline is washing—not washing himself, but clothes. There are no public laundries in Budapest—a curious omission in the economy of the city. An occasional laundress, singularly inefficient and most expensive, may be found, and is searched for by foreigners. But almost all Hungarian washing is done at home, and a well-organized block of flats is supplied with a communal laundry, which the different flat-holders use in turn. An undisciplined people would find occasion for quarrelling and much ill-feeling in a

system like this. The Hungarian women fit into it simply and peaceably. It is not indeed so difficult for Hungarians as it would be for Englishwomen to be friendly over a communal laundry. The English wash clothes once a week. The Hungarians wash them once a month, or once in two months, or—I hesitate to write this down, but it is true—once in three months. It is a sign of social inferiority to wash clothes often. The "best" people—the really well-to-do bourgeoisie—treat washing as Englishwomen do spring cleaning, making a very rare event of it. There is some reason in this. In order to hold out for a couple of months without washing anything you must have a very large supply of sheets, towels and pocket-handkerchiefs. To have a very large supply of such things you must be fairly well-to-do, and to be fairly well-to-do is a sign of social superiority. Only a family in very straitened circumstances, without proper pride, has a washing day once a week, and such people are very properly looked down upon. Therefore I am afraid the Hungarian women look down on their English sisters, with their comparatively scanty supplies of linen, as living on a lower level of civilization.

Lifts are rare in flat blocks in Budapest, and when they exist are very seldom in working order. In the few houses where the lift actually goes up and down it is under the control of the house master. I have mentioned this functionary before, and it is quite in keeping with the rest of his character that he regards the lift as an occasion for blackmailing everyone who uses it. He begins by making a rule that it

is only available at the times when nobody wants to use it, and then charges heavily for working it at any other hour. He has, tucked away in purlieus at the very top or in the cellars underneath the house he controls, a queer band of retainers, who make their living by carrying up and down the interminable flights of stairs such things as luggage, coal and wood for burning. These pariahs pay a rent for their accommodation to the house master, and it is to his interest to see that they obtain employment; therefore he dislocates the machinery of the lift if he can, or, if he cannot do that, makes it as nearly useless as possible.

The pressure of an increasing population on the existing housing accommodation forced Budapest to build these vast blocks of flats during the days of her prosperity. The pressure is far worse now, and poor Budapest can only build very slowly, if at all.

A housing shortage was one of the problems which had to be faced after the war by every city in Europe, Budapest among the rest. But the position of Budapest was the worst of all. All the usual reasons for a shortage existed there, and in addition one peculiar to Hungary, which aggravated the difficulty horribly. When the Czechs, Serbs and Roumanians took over the tracts of Hungarian territory which were given them by the Treaty of Trianon, they took over going concerns. The Roumanians, for instance, took over Transylvania, and Transylvania was a civilized country. Taxes were collected there—so were rates. Justice was administered in courts by magistrates and judges.

Schools were taught. Universities spread abroad the light of a higher learning. There were therefore tax-collectors, legal luminaries, teachers, professors, and so forth—the whole of that salaried middle class which every civilized country finds it necessary to support. All these officials, being Magyars, were most unwilling to serve under a Roumanian Government, even if the Roumanians had wanted them, which they did not, having plenty of men of their own out of whom to make a new salaried middle class.

The unfortunate Hungarian officials lost their jobs, their houses, and their salaries. The only thing for them to do was to flock back into what was left of the old Hungary. Being the kind of people they were—salaried men—they could not settle down in the country to till fields. They could not have got fields even if they had been fit to till them. Life was only possible for them in towns and cities. But the new Hungary contained no city, not even a big town, except Budapest. It was therefore into Budapest that all these people and a great many others flocked. All of them wanted houses or flats, and wanted them immediately.

The position was very nearly desperate. Building was impossible for many reasons, chiefly because of the extreme uncertainty of the value of money, and in any case no sufficient building could have been done in time to be of much use. The Hungarian Government did what most Governments do when in a difficulty of this sort: it made extremely stringent laws intended to supersede the operation of the law

of supply and demand, and it established a special Ministry—the *Wohnungs Amt*—charged with the duty of seeing that people got flats when there were not any flats for them to get. The result was chaos, tempered with appalling corruption. Everyone even remotely connected with house property took, gave, and demanded bribes. The most unworthy and unscrupulous people realized small, sometimes large, fortunes, and everyone who had any brains used them to discover ways of avoiding the law. Anybody who was in possession of so much as a coal-cellar clung to it with grim tenacity and let out bits of it at exorbitant rents to the less fortunate.

CHAPTER XI

A PATRIOT

THE intelligent tourist will probably know before he reaches Hungary—he will certainly have guessed if he has read these rambling notes so far—that Budapest is a twin city, a coalition of cities, a marriage consummated in 1873 between Buda on the right bank and Pest on the left bank of the river. What he perhaps does not know is that the union is really one of three cities, Ó-Buda, Buda and Pest.

Ó-Buda, on the right bank, higher up than Buda, is the oldest town of the three. Here, at the very beginning of the Christian era, and perhaps before it, there existed and flourished the Roman colony of Aquincum. For the last half-century archæologists have been digging out and uncovering the remains of Roman buildings. Their findings were interesting but scarcely sensational. A small museum contains bits and scraps of old Roman work. There are the remains of an aqueduct, the foundations of a theatre, and a bath. Are not these things written in the book of Baedeker, where also is to be found the useful information that you can go to Ó-Buda by tram ?

The Roman colony disappeared, as many other

Roman colonies did, under the trampling feet of barbarian invaders, and the next thing we know about Ó-Buda—and this we do not know, but only try to believe—is that it was the scene of Attila's great camp, celebrated, as M. Tharaud has reminded us, by poets.

We touch solid ground, as solid as any we are likely to get, when we hear that Arpad, the founder of Hungary's first royal family, took possession of the place and built a town there. He appears to have begun by settling on an island called Csepel, a few miles below Buda. He soon changed his mind, crossed the river, and occupied Ó-Buda. Anyone who has seen Csepel will not wonder that he preferred Ó-Buda. The island is large, flat, dull and very damp. Ó-Buda might make a pleasant capital, though it cannot have been a good place to live in in days when a defensive position was the first thing to be desired for a city.

It was Bela IV who definitely severed the connection of the Hungarian kings with Ó-Buda by building his palace in Buda on the hills where the present palace stands. Thenceforth Ó-Buda ceases to have any prominence in Hungarian history, and is now merely a shabby suburb interesting only to antiquaries.

Pest, the third city in the triple alliance, has a history which goes back to quite respectable antiquity. The name appears in thirteenth-century documents, and special privileges were granted to it by Hungarian kings as far back as the time of Bela IV. But Pest makes no appeal to us as an ancient city.

It is modern, and what splendour it possesses came to it in the nineteenth century. It may almost be said that Pest owes its greatness, almost its existence, to one man.

Count Stephen Széchenyi has been called the greatest Hungarian of the nineteenth century. I am not sure that he might not be justly called the greatest Hungarian of any century, though he was not a saint, a king, or a general. He belonged to an ancient noble family, and his father, Count Francis Széchenyi, was the founder of the Hungarian National Museum. Count Stephen served with distinction in the Hungarian Huzzars during the Napoleonic wars, and fought in the Battle of Leipsic as well as in other places. He began his military career at the age of sixteen.

During the period which followed the peace he travelled in Italy, France and England, and became painfully aware of the backwardness of Hungarian civilization. He returned to his own country an ardent patriot. We hear of his making a speech in the Hungarian language in the House of Magnates —a dignified assembly accustomed to carry on its debates in Latin. The young count's breach of respectable tradition was startling, and we can readily believe was not popular. But, unlike many more recent language revivalists, he was prepared to back his convictions by something more tangible than speeches. A little while later he gave proof of this.

At a preliminary session of the Hungarian Diet a certain orator, one Paul Nagy, made an eloquent

speech in favour of establishing a Hungarian Academy of Science. The idea was the encouragement and development of native culture as a counterpoise to the centralizing policy of Vienna, which threatened the destruction of all that was distinctively Hungarian. When Paul Nagy had finished his oration, Count Stephen Széchenyi stepped forward and offered in a brief, quite unoratorical speech to give one year's income of his estates to the foundation of the proposed academy. He did actually give sixty thousand crowns. The rest of the nation gave another ninety thousand, and the academy was founded. It still stands—a dignified building in the Ferencz Joszef Tér. It is the home of a fine, well-kept library and of a very interesting collection of portraits of Hungarian celebrities. It possesses a finely proportioned lecture-room, where various learned societies conduct their proceedings. It has been, and still is, what its founder meant it to be, the centre of Hungary's intellectual life.

Count Stephen Széchenyi did more than found this academy It was through his exertions and owing to his initiative that the Lancz Hid was built by English engineers, the bridge which first joined Pest to Buda and rendered possible the city of to-day. The tunnel which runs under the hill on which the palace stands was also the work of this Count Stephen. In those days—between 1820 and 1830—this tunnel was regarded as an engineering feat of some importance. It still remains an extremely useful highway, rendering easy the traffic between Pest and the western part

of Buda—traffic which would scarcely be possible if it had to go over or round the hill. It was he, too, who set the first steamboat paddling on the Danube in 1830—a very early example of steam navigation.

Count Stephen Széchenyi was something more than a patriot of the familiar language-revival type, more than a municipal reformer with a taste for engineering, more than a Mecænas of Hungarian learning. He was a statesman.

The Hungarian Magnate, having fallen under the fascination of Maria Theresa, became half-Austrianized, almost wholly de-Magyarized. Count Stephen Széchenyi recognized, as few nationalist patriots ever do, that his country would be helpless, or at all events feeble without its aristocracy. He set himself to the task of weaning the great Magnates off the delights of the Austrian Court and Austrian civilization, re-winning their devotion to their native city. Instead of appealing to their patriotism or girding at their want of it—both perfectly futile things to do—he founded the National Horse Breeding Association and established a first-rate club in Pest.

He knew his countrymen and his own class. The Hungarian gentleman is primarily a sportsman. He and the Englishman of the same class are probably the only people in Europe who really delight in country life and country sport, especially horse-racing. And the Hungarian gentleman, in this also resembling the English variety of his kind, loves a good club nearly as much as he loves the race-course. Up to the beginning of the war

racing flourished in Hungary to such an extent that a colony of English jockies was established at Gőd, near Budapest. The club still exists and is a centre of social life as the Academy is of intellectual life in Pest.

Count Stephen Széchenyi interested himself in trade and commerce. He even wrote a book on the difficult subject of "Credit," which excited people in his own day and produced a storm of indignation against its author. I am told—I have not read the book myself—that the work is remarkable for its thoroughness and scholarship, its power and its practical statesmanship. All this we may believe without difficulty, but the writing is also credited with "poetic imagination," a quality which must be rare in books on "Credit." Yet since the author was a Hungarian the thing is not incredible. The Hungarians get poetry and imagination into most things they do. For fifteen years or so Count Stephen Széchenyi remained a national hero as he had every right to be. Every good patriot honoured his name, which was a credit to the good patriots—for his teaching, or part of it, cannot possibly have been agreeable. "Do not constantly trouble about the vanished glories of the past," he wrote, "but rather let your determined patriotism bring about the prosperity of the Fatherland. Many there are who think that Hungary has been; but for my part I like to think that Hungary shall be." The Hungarians are in many ways singularly like the Irish. I wonder whether my own fellow-countrymen would continue to honour a patriot who told

them to stop admiring the past (about which we know singularly little), and turn to work for the present and the future. I am afraid his popularity would scarcely last as long as Széchenyi's did.

Yet even to his popularity there came an end. A new patriot arose, young as Széchenyi no longer was, ardent and vigorous. Louis Kossuth captured the imagination of Hungary, preached to willing ears the doctrines of the French Revolution, and succeeded in plunging the country into a turmoil of war and a consequent period of misery. Széchenyi's reputation suffered an eclipse. His popularity waned. He spent his last years in a half-hearted struggle against the working out of his own principles. No figure is more pathetic than that of the enthusiast whose spirit time and experience has dulled, who sees new men reasoning from his premises to conclusions which seem to him fraught with all imaginable danger ; who must watch others, heedless of his warnings, pushing fast, too fast, along the path which he himself had pointed out before he knew that it led straight to a precipice.

In 1860 Count Stephen Széchenyi died, having lived long enough to see the disastrous end of Kossuth's War of Independence, long enough to feel the full bitterness of the years that followed it, not long enough to see the opening of the period of prosperity and independence which followed the Ausgleich, which was the fruit of Déak's policy.

His statue, one of the most striking in Pest, stands in the Ferencz Joszef Tér, in front of the

Academy of Science, which he founded. The figure of the great Hungarian patriot and statesman stands high and calm over one of the principal squares of the city which he did so much to create. All day long the traffic hurries by—tramcars whose trollies, racing along the overhead wires, shriek hoarsely, great wagons heavily laden with the cargoes of the river-steamers, the motor-cars of the very rich, the fast-trotting horses which the Hungarian nobility still love to use in their carriages, the humble hired carriages which crawl along, the unending stream of foot passengers, hurrying, sauntering, eager about this or that, ever going on and back and on and back. But the figure on the pedestal does not look at this.

The head is slightly, ever so slightly, turned to the right, and the eyes of the great Count, if these stone eyes can see at all, are fixed on the river, where now whole fleets of steamers thrash with their paddle-wheels the yellow water on which he launched the first of them. From German towns, through Austrian lands, past mediæval castles, past Vienna, they come, and go down between the low banks of the great Hungarian plain, through the Iron Gates, past cities, forests, strange lands, till they reach the shores of the Black Sea and transfer their cargoes into ocean-going ships. The mighty traffic of innumerable steamers! And this man made the beginning of it.

Across the river the eyes see—or might see if they saw at all—the span of the Lancz Hid, the chain bridge which his mind conceived, which his

THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE AND SZÉCHENYI MONUMENT, PEST

BELL

energy created, across which go hurrying crowds, to which the steamers, passing up and down, make their obeisance, lowering the funnels which are their pride and the outward signs of their inward strength. Beyond is the round, dark circle of the entrance to his tunnel, through which the traffic goes with hollow roaring, and even the feet of walking passengers echo as they walk.

To the left of the statue, on the east side of the square, is a great bank—one of those buildings which proclaim the arrogant dignity of commerce and finance. Count Stephen Széchenyi wrote a book on "Credit," full of poetic imagination. Behind the shining counters of the bank are men who have gone deeper into the mysteries of finance than ever he did; but what share of poetic imagination have the bankers of Budapest to-day?

Behind the statue the tall sad windows of his Academy look down on him. It was, perhaps, his greatest work. Of all his work it seems to-day the only one to remember and to honour him. Close by another statue is the seated figure of Déak, the man who won for Hungary the political independence of which Count Stephen Széchenyi dreamed, for which he hoped, from which he shrank when Kossuth stretched out violent hands to grasp it.

In front of the statue, the most bitterly significant to-day of all the buildings grouped around the squares, is the Duna Palota Hotel. Once called the Ritz it changed its name in obedience to the patriotic impulse which Count Stephen Széchenyi started. The name, emblazoned high in huge gold letters,

pays its tribute to the reputation of the man whose statue stands beneath it. But within, in the great dining-room, or on summer days outside under the spread awnings, the men who are in Budapest as the instruments of the destruction of Count Stephen Széchenyi's Hungary, go to and fro, chatter, laugh, dance, feast. Here lived and live the servants of the Treaty-makers of Trianon, the Heads of Military Missions, of the Commissions for the Establishment of Boundaries, all busy at the fulfilment of the orders which decreed the dismemberment and humiliation of Hungary. Here live the diplomats of many nations, cool-headed representatives of the great Western States, emissaries of the new countries of the Balkans, who have in their hearts envy and fear of Hungary, fear even of the new Hungary which is manacled and impotent. Here, feasting, drinking, dancing, but never laughing, are the world's new brigands, the manipulators of international finance. Where a carcase is there are gathered together the vultures who prey on it, and nowhere more thickly than in Hungary since the war. Attendant on them are stony-faced women with rapacious eyes, whose bodies these men have bought with the very gold for which they sold their own souls.

The Treaty-makers robbed Hungary of her territory. The agents of the new Succession States grasp, bully, boast and fear. But it is these others, these Semitic jugglers with finance, who have done Hungary the worst injury, for it is they who have gone near to breaking the heart and corrupting the integrity of the people

It is a curious instance of the savage humour of the fate which directs the ways of men that all these swarm and feast and scheme where the shadow of the statue of Count Stephen Széchenyi falls upon them.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

CHAPTER XII

PEST

THE citizens of Pest are proud and have every reason to be proud of the Andrássy-út. It is a great, wide street, perfectly straight and a mile and a half long. Like Fifth Avenue in New York it is kept free of trams, which may and do cross it, but must not lay their lines from end to end. Those who go up and down it are served by 'buses, the only petrol-driven 'buses in Budapest, and by an underground electric railway, the first of its kind in Europe.

The Andrássy-út—" út " is the Hungarian for a street, to be distinguished from " utca," which means a small or narrow, not necessarily an unimportant, street—starts badly. Opening off the Vilmos Csaszar-utca at a sharp angle, it gives the wanderer the impression of incompleteness which he experiences so often in Budapest. It is like a thoroughfare which has only just been opened up. The shops on each side are of that small, apparently temporary kind which establish themselves in new thoroughfares before the important firms have grasped the value of the sites offered to them. It is not until we have reached the Opera House that the street acquires any real dignity.

The Opera House is a building which any city in the world might be pleased to possess. The exterior is finely proportioned, impressive and conceived in a spirit entirely suited to its purpose. Inside the staircase, the foyer, the corridors, and the auditorium convey a feeling of the magnificence of the arts for whose honour they exist. But it is the opera itself, even more than the Opera House, which is the great glory of Budapest. It is a noteworthy thing that the opera has been kept going and kept at a high level of excellence by the aid of a State subsidy much larger than the present Hungary seems able to afford. From the point of view of the artist, though perhaps not from that of the strict economist, it is an immense credit to any people that they should ungrudgingly spend money on opera in times when the salaries of State functionaries are reduced almost to vanishing point, when schools have to be closed and when the public is suffering from the most burdensome taxes.

Even with the help of a State subsidy the position of the opera in Budapest is difficult, and, save for the devotion of many of those actively engaged in the performances, the high level of the music and staging could not be maintained. The lure of richer countries where artists can command high salaries tends to draw away from Hungary the best native talent. But if money payment in Hungary is comparatively small, there can be few countries in which artists win more of the better reward of intelligent appreciation. The Hungarians are passionately fond of opera, as indeed they are of

all theatrical performances. The Royal Opera House in the Andrássy-út, a huge building, is filled night after night. On the occasion of special performances of any kind it is very difficult to obtain tickets. The People's Opera House, also State subsidized, is a much larger building, and it, too, is always filled. The performances there, though not perhaps the staging, are on the same level as those of the Royal Opera House. Besides the opera houses the theatres are crammed night after night, not only for the performances of plays by Hungarian writers, but also when the works of foreign dramatists are given. Both Oscar Wilde and Bernard Shaw are appreciated in Budapest, and there is a school of Shakespeare players, whose performances draw immense audiences and are better in some respects than any I have seen in England. Enthusiastic crowds of people educated in art tend to produce good artists even when material rewards are small.

A large Jewish population in any city helps to foster some kinds of art, especially music. But apart from the Jews, though they are the great patrons of the opera and the theatre, the Hungarians know better than most people what is good and what is bad. They take art of every kind much more seriously than we do in England. It is, of course, an arguable question whether an artistic soul is an advantage to a nation which has got to get down to the job of digging in the heavy clay of facts if it is to survive as a nation at all.

Beyond the Opera House the tone of the Andrássy-út begins to improve. The shops are better, and

after a while give way to dignified blocks of dwelling-houses. The wanderer—who will do well to walk the whole length of this street—reaches the Korond, a spacious circle adorned with statues, across which the street runs. After that the character of the Andrássy-út changes again. It divides into three roadways, the main broad way in the centre, with two narrow roads one on each side, separated from the central thoroughfare by wide footpaths and lined with trees. Much of the traffic is diverted to the narrower ways, to the great gain in dignity of the central road.

From this point on, the wealthy classes have seized upon the street and built large villas along the sides of it. These houses are set back in beautifully kept gardens, full of flowering shrubs which are a delight in early summer. No greater contrast can be imagined than that which exists between these habitations, for the most part the work of a very wealthy bourgeoisie, and the "palaces" of the old aristocracy in Buda. The Hungarians, though artists in their appreciation of music and literature, generally seem to go wrong over buildings. The best that can be said for their architects is that they do better with theatres and private houses than they do when they attempt churches. The Opera House is a good specimen of modern work in the Italian Renaissance style. The houses on the upper part of the Andrássy-út were evidently intended for people who meant to live handsomely and had money enough to achieve their desire. They are ostentatious sometimes, inclined to be fantastic occa-

sionally, but they are never mean. It is, after all, something to be willing to spend lavishly. Many people accumulate money without conquering the vice of niggardliness. These Andrássy-út houses are not the houses of men with the souls of small shopkeepers; they are built by architects who realize some of the possibilities of wealth.

One wonders, as one passes by, whether they are the houses of anyone now. Some of them are unoccupied. Others seem half-occupied, as if their owners were living in small corners of them. Only a few seem to keep up the magnificence which must, in other happier days, have been the characteristic of them all.

Across the end of the Andrássy-út, a very fitting termination for such a street, runs the great Millennium Monument, the crowning achievement of the Hungarian passion for ornament, erected during the years of Hungary's greatest prosperity. Here the Hungarian love for the ornate and the grandiose finds its fullest and its best expression. In the centre of a wide segment of a circle rises a single tall pillar, very gracefully proportioned, on top of which there is a figure of the Archangel Gabriel, standing with outspread wings as if poised for flight, holding aloft the double cross of Hungary. On each side of the column is a colonnade surmounted by figures of Hungarian kings. It is flanked by two buildings: that on the right, as one approaches the Andrássy-út is the Uj Mücsarnok, the gallery of the New Art Union, where exhibitions of modern pictures are held; on the other side is the

Szépmüvészeti Muzeum, the National Gallery of Hungary.

The Szépmüvészeti Muzeum, or Museum of Fine Arts, is a piece of modern architecture in the Renaissance style. A large central hall divides the building into two parts. On the left of the entrance is the Modern Gallery, consisting chiefly of the works of contemporary Hungarian artists, and on the right is the Gallery of Old Masters. Of the two the wanderer will find the Gallery of Old Masters the better worth visiting. It was begun in 1871, when the State purchased about four hundred pictures from the Esterhazy Gallery, and it now contains about a thousand pictures, mostly of the Italian, Dutch and Spanish Schools. There are sixteen central rooms, fairly well lit from the roof, and eighteen small cabinets round the outside walls.

Before paying a visit, it is well to find out on what days the gallery is open, because if it is closed it is necessary to tip much more heavily in order to get in. The wanderer, having produced the requisite kronen, will find himself in Room I, which is one of the six rooms allotted to the Italian School. Here there are some quaint fifteenth- and sixteenth-century paintings. St. John the Baptist is seen having his head cut off, and there are pictures of the Manger at Bethlehem, surrounded by singularly pious cows. In the next three rooms there are the works of other early Italian painters. There are Madonnas by Raphael and Correggio, an exquisite Madonna and St. Anthony by Filippino Lippi, a Tintoretto, a Bellini, and a Sebastian del Piombo. There are two

more rooms of Italian painters of a later date, and beyond them the Spanish School.

The Spanish collection is not very large, but it possesses many works of great merit. There are seven Murillos and several pictures by Goya and El Greco. El Greco's "Annunciation" and Goya's "Girl with a Pitcher" being as good as anything in the gallery.

Practically the whole of the rest of the space is taken up with the Dutch, Flemish and German Schools. It is an extensive array, including the works of many famous artists; but it suffers perhaps from being a little too extensive, not only for the proportions of the gallery, but also for the patience of the wanderer. Unless he is a particularly keen art critic, he is likely to be overwhelmed by three rooms and fifteen cabinets filled entirely with the art of the Netherlands. It is wise either to leave out some of them altogether, or else to stop after seeing the Spanish School and come back another day with renewed strength to cope with the worthy Teuton. There are so many fine works among them, most of them similar in style, that it is difficult to pick out any as being of particular excellence. There are several portraits by Vandyck, Franz Hals and Rubens, and in the German School there is a fine portrait by Durer. There are seascapes by Van der Velde, landscapes by Hobbema and Goyen, works of Wouverman, Cuyp and Rembrandt, and an immense number of pictures of fat peasants inside dirty houses.

Although there are a large number of beautiful

paintings among these various Dutch, Flemish and German Schools, the general impression conveyed is rather sordid. It is, therefore, a great contrast to arrive, at the end of the whole gallery, into the one small cabinet allotted to the English.

In the English Cabinet the whole atmosphere is one of cleanliness, not unmixed with a faint tinge of godliness. There are not more than twenty pictures in the whole collection, and yet in a way they seem to epitomize the English character. There is a Reynolds portrait of a red-faced admiral which at once suggests roast beef, and there is a portrait of Mrs. Murchison by Raeburn, full of the pious dignity of the English lady. There are also portraits by Gainsborough and Hoppner and two small landscapes by Constable. So, although the number of English paintings is small, they form an attractive feature of the gallery. It is quite a relief, after so long a spell among religious Italians and sordid Dutchmen, to arrive in a familiar atmosphere of sanity and soap. There is a great truth in Wordsworth's stanza :

> I travelled among unknown men
> In lands beyond the sea,
> Nor, England, did I know till then
> What love I bore to thee.

After the English collection all that remains is to get out of the Gallery again. But this is not so easy as it seems, for there is always just one more picture that one wants to take a second glance at, and it generally takes at least half an hour to tear

oneself away. There is, in fact, a great charm about this Gallery of Old Masters. It is not a collection of world-wide reputation, and it is not so rich or so representative as the galleries of many other nations, but it is well chosen and well cared for, and it possesses all the fascination that can be exercised by fine art.

CHAPTER XIII

PEST

BEYOND the Millennium monument lies the Város Liget, the most important park in Budapest. The approach to it is across a wide bridge, on each side of which is an artificial lake. Here in winter Budapest "society"—and a good many other people who are not "society"—skate to the music of bands and after nightfall by brilliant artificial light. Skating is a sport at which Hungarians excel. But even in Budapest there are beginners, awkward on their skates as swans are in walking. They are segregated in a pond of their own—very much, one imagines, to their own comfort—certainly to that of those who have learnt to swoop and glide, who have accomplished that poetry of motion which is only possible in skating, which is nowhere seen in more perfect grace than in Budapest.

In this artificial lake, on the right side of the bridge, is an artificial island, and on it a castle, also artificial. This is the Museum of Agriculture, and it is full of interesting things; but the building itself is more interesting than anything in it. It is intended to illustrate the different architectural styles—Gothic, Renaissance, Romanesque and Baroque—which are to be found in Hungary.

Actual buildings have been carefully copied. The wing nearest the town, for instance, is a copy of an ancient castle of the Hunyadi's, part of which, at least, was built in the days of the great János. The experiment of a building in such varied styles seems almost foredoomed to artistic failure. It is too fantastic for any purpose under the sun except education, and not very useful for that. But in this case the unexpected happened, and a building of unusual beauty has been produced. It owes something, no doubt, to its picturesque situation and to the moat-like effect of the water round it; but —impossible as this seems—it actually achieves a certain harmony, a measure of dignity and attractiveness. The wanderer gazes at it first with amazement, then with puzzled uncertainty, but at last with admiration.

The north part of the park, on the left hand after crossing the bridge, contains a Zoological Gardens, chiefly remarkable for the entrance-gate, a picture of which might very well serve as a frontispiece to the *Arabian Nights*. Beyond the Zoological Gardens are the great Széchenyi Baths. These and the baths in the Gellért Hotel are the finest and the most luxuriously fitted of the many baths in Budapest. Their supply of hot water comes from Artesian wells bored at the end of the Andrássy-út. They contain huge tanks of beautifully blue, transparent water of various temperatures. In these the bather can wallow for hours, if he chooses, or bathe or dive or swim. There are dry, hot rooms, like those in our Turkish baths; steam-rooms in which it is

impossible to see and very difficult to breathe; shower-baths of every possible kind; and, of course, massage-rooms. This kind of bathing is so popular in Budapest that the many establishments are always full—generally too full to be pleasant. In the large entrance-hall at the Széchenyi or the Gellért Baths you find on certain days long queues of people waiting to buy tickets for admission.

Beyond the baths the park disappears, as if no one ever cared to go past them. The roads, well kept and well planned up to that point, degenerate badly. The grass becomes either muddy or dusty. The whole place seems to come unravelled, until the wanderer finds himself, quite unexpectedly, in a broad road with tram-lines running along it. Like so much else in Budapest, this part of the park gives the impression of being unfinished, as if the abundant energy which erected the great monument at the entrance, the composite museum buildings, the Oriental dream-gate of the Zoological Gardens, and the vast bathing-house, had become so completely exhausted that there was none left for the laying down of a simple roadway.

The part of the park which lies on the right side of the lake is finished—*ad unguem.* Like the world in Stevenson's child poem, it is full

> Of such a number of things
> That I am sure we should all be as happy as kings.

Certainly if museums, band-stands, statues, smooth walks, well-kept grass, trees, a fashionable sports club and restaurants induce happiness this part of

the park ought to be a paradise. There is even, among the restaurants, a branch of Gerbeaud's, a tea-shop and confectioner's which is famous in Budapest and believed by the Hungarians to be equally famous all over Europe. Certain kinds of small cakes—very sugary, very creamy and jammy, so sticky that they can only be comfortably eaten with spoons—are called Gerbeauds, whether they are actually made by Gerbeaud himself or not. You ask for a Gerbeaud in an hotel after dinner if you want something sticky and sweet. This is fame. The wanderer ought certainly to visit the central Gerbeaud, in Vörös-Marty Tér, which used to be called Gisella Tér. Gisella was the wife of King Stephen the Saint, and, one might suppose, is entitled to a square in a fashionable part of the town. But Vörös-Marty was a poet and a patriot, so poor Gisella had to give place to him, after an immense statue—or rather a whole group of statues—was erected to his honour in the square. I am not at all sure that both queen and poet will not have to give way in the end to the confectioner. Certainly a cab-driver will take you straight to the place you want if, having forgotten the names both of Gisella and Vörös-Marty, you ask simply to be driven to Gerbeaud Tér. This also is fame. The Londoner may be proud of Buzzard's cakes, but it would be useless to ask a taxi to drive you to Buzzard Street when you wanted to go to Oxford Street.

At afternoon tea-time Gerbeaud's is full. Rank, fashion, and beauty assemble there. The rank one takes for granted. It is not a rare thing in Budapest,

for a very large proportion of the Hungarian upper classes has titles. The "fashion" is obvious, and beauty is more than common. I have heard the Hungarians described as a beautiful race. This is not true. The peasants and the lower classes in towns, when not Jewish, are squat, square-faced, with high cheek-bones. The prevailing type is Mongolian. But among the Hungarian aristocracy there is a great deal of physical beauty. The men are often finely built, with well-shaped features and frank, fearless faces. One has no difficulty in believing that they are good soldiers and very good officers. Neither among the men nor women of the upper classes is there much trace of the Mongolian type. Are they of a different race, part of that Nordic stock to which we are asked to believe that all our aristocracies belong? The Hungarians themselves would deny this, and—their pedigrees are unimpeachable—they have certainly been Magyar for a long time.

Owing to the difficulty of getting a table or tea put on it in the afternoon, the wanderer will be well advised to pay his visit to Gerbeaud's about noon. He will find the rank, fashion, and beauty there just the same, only not in quite such large quantities. The Hungarian breakfast (I think I have mentioned this before) is miserable: a tiny ration of coffee with whipped cream in it, and a *semel* or two—the smallest and least satisfying of rolls. The Hungarian luncheon-hour is 2 p.m. or later. The time between is long, and the Hungarian lady, out for a morning's shopping, finds it necessary

to sustain herself with a sandwich and a glass of Tokay. Where can she go—since the popular café is for her humbler sisters—except to Gerbeaud's? The sandwiches are good—so is the Tokay, so is the coffee, so are the multitudinous little biscuits called *te baekkerei*. If she goes away with a box of chocolates in her bag, the chocolates are good too—so good that I have known English people buy them and send them home to England, although there are in England—I must not advertise my favourite confectioner — several people who make good chocolates.

Gerbeaud himself, as his name indicates, was a Frenchman, but his business was not built up on French knowledge of cookery and French skill. Gerbeaud's predecessor was a Hungarian, and it was he who made the shop famous. Old-established residents in Budapest still call the shop and the cakes by the name of the Hungarian.

I have sometimes wondered whether the Hungarians ought not to be given credit for being the originators of the rich and varied little cakes which fill our confectioners shops now—indeed, cover the counters of pastry-cooks' shops all over Europe. When I was a boy the variety of little cakes was small, and those which existed were plain and unadorned compared to the sticky, sugary, jammy things we have now, each lying in its little white-frilled dish like a precious baby in a cradle. There was a time, in 1888 or thereabouts, when London was suddenly invaded by tea-shops which called themselves Hungarian. They were immensely popular

because they supplied little cakes which at that time were quite strange to us—rich, sumptuous and delicious. Were those tea-shops really Hungarian? Did their cakes, or the knowledge of how to make them, actually come from Hungary? On such subjects one seeks information in vain from books, and human memory is a fallible thing. But it would be pleasant to think that in this matter, too, Europe owes a debt to Hungary. The same race which saved us all from Turkish domination hundreds of years ago, and, just the other day, gave its first decisive check to the advancing waves of Bolshevism, may perhaps also have made our afternoon tea-parties the glorious things they are. The *croissant*, now eaten everywhere and at its best in Paris, came originally from Vienna, and the French were taught to make it by Austrian bakers. There is nothing absurd in supposing that the art of making sumptuous cakelets came from Hungary, from that very shop on Gisella (or Vörös-Marty) Tér, where Hungarian ladies are even now digging their pretty teeth into these delicious trifles.

CHAPTER XIV

CLOTHES

THE wanderer, if he has gone forth on a pilgrimage in the true wandering spirit, will want to buy, but not merely tooth-brushes, razor-strops and umbrellas to replace those which he leaves behind in hotels and railway-carriages in the course of his wandering; he will want to buy something belonging to the country in which he finds himself—something characteristic, something, if possible, not to be bought at home.

Budapest offers him just what he wants. He can buy Hungarian jewellery, brooches, necklaces and so forth, made after the traditional Hungarian fashion. If he is fortunate, and comparatively rich, he may buy the original ornaments worn and beloved by the Hungarian nobility. There are to be found occasionally in auction-rooms and old shops complete sets of the ornaments which Hungarian gentlemen wore on festive occasions—hat-brooches, collars, buttons, belts and spurs, all set with turquoises, pearls (though not good pearls), and sapphires and emeralds. The stones are set in wrought gold or silver work, sometimes enamelled, and in the case of the Transylvanian ornaments also backed with enamel. But London—that great

YOUNG PEASANTS IN NATIONAL DRESS

GEO. H. PRESS

Babylon which absorbs "all manner of precious things"—now imports what is best in this Hungarian jewellery work, and, in spite of stringent export laws and duties, a brisk trade is done in jewellery from Budapest.

Fabrics and needlework are a more promising field for the wanderer who wants to buy. It is true that a great deal of Hungarian embroidery finds its way to London, and is on sale in shops there, but for the most part this is inferior stuff—new, perhaps specially made for export, not to be compared to the old Hungarian peasant embroideries. Perhaps the very opening of foreign markets and the prospect of gain has vulgarized the taste of the peasant workers. Perhaps the cosmopolitanizing of fashion in dress has destroyed the old love for beautiful work among simple people. Whatever the reason may be, the new Hungarian embroidery is not equal to the old. The colours are too often crude, where they used to be daring. The designs are uninspired, perhaps because the designers are afraid to do anything but copy what their predecessors did.

But old embroidery is still to be obtained at no very high price. It is worked, generally, on very coarse home-spun linen, in contrasting colours, or, if it comes from Transylvania, in dark blue or red. Occasionally one comes across a design wrought in undyed goat's hair. The peasants used the embroidery for the adornment of their garments and for the covering of the cushions with which the beds of their houses are piled. Unfortunately the

change of fashion which has followed the spread of what we call education is altering the peasants' feeling for beauty in clothing and their idea of what is convenient in household furnishing. They are selling and other people are buying a good deal of the old work.

The peasant women are also selling their shawls. The Hungarian shawl is not, so far as I know, on sale in London shops. The fashion which caused a rush for Spanish and Chinese embroidered shawls passed Hungary by, perhaps because the Hungarian women's shawls are not embroidered. They are made of silk—sometimes of very rich and beautiful silk—and the different colours are woven into the material. The centre of the shawl is often plain and dark, but the borders and corners are brightly coloured. It is here that the Hungarian's instinct for combining contrasting colours is seen at its best. The shawls have long thick fringes, and, as might be expected, it is this part of the shawl which wears out first. It is not easy to get a shawl with a perfect fringe, and sometimes, though the shawl itself is good, only tatters of the fringe remain. The shawl itself is folded into a triangle, and the Hungarian women either tie or pin together the two corners which meet in front. The expert buyer is on his guard, not only against tattered fringes, but also against the holes, tears and darns caused by the constant pinning of two of the four corners.

When the Hungarian peasants have got rid of their embroidery and their shawls and taken to

MUSEUM OF AGRICULTURE, BUDAPEST

wearing central European clothes, a great deal of the picturesqueness of Hungarian country life will have disappeared. But this has not happened yet, and it will, one hopes, be a long time before the change is accomplished. On Sundays and fête days the wanderer can still see the peasants wearing, without affectation, their very beautiful traditional costumes. There is one thing more sad than the disappearance of national costumes and local costoms, and that is their revival, after disappearance, under the fostering patronage of well-meaning sentimentalists. We may be thankful that the need for societies and guilds of such people does not yet exist in Hungary. The peasants still wear their beautiful dresses because they like them, not because superior people offer them prizes for pretending to like them when they really prefer something quite different. But the wanderer must undertake a little journey if he is to see the peasant dresses in their full glory.

The nearest and most accessible place to go for the purpose is MezőKovesd, three or four hours' railway journey north-east of Budapest. I went there one Ascension Day with a small party of English people, under the guidance of a Hungarian gentleman. The village was in full fête, and we were given a cheering welcome by the Deputy—whom we should call the local M.P.—and a gentleman who held an office something like that of our mayor. The M.P., being accustomed to polite society in Budapest, wore ordinary clothes. The mayor compromised. He had on the trousers

usually worn by mayors, but he wore an immensely wide, deeply pleated white shirt with very baggy sleeves, also pleated. Over this he had a short black jacket, a tiny round black hat, and from his waist down a very long white, apron-like garment, most elaborately pleated and stiffly starched.

In company with these officials we drove through a clean, prosperous village to what, I suppose, was the town hall. Nothing is more striking than the contrast between Budapest and a country village in the appearance of prosperity. The city is shabby, dilapidated, obviously poor, all the more strikingly so because of its pretentiousness. The villages, with no pretensions of any kind and hardly a two-storied building to be seen, are clean, bright freshly painted, in good repair, and give the stranger the impression of being full of vitality.

In the town hall—if it was a town hall—luncheon was prepared for us—an excellent meal which the Deputy and the mayor shared with us. We were joined by some Hungarian ladies from a neighbouring château, who looked exactly like a party of ladies from an English country house. The Hungarian ladies alone among the women of Europe understand what are known as country clothes. Other ladies—the French pre-eminently—can dress themselves for towns; but transplanted into the depths of the country are certain to look as if they did not live there and could not live there. The Hungarians, like the English, seem more at home and at their ease in the country than anywhere else.

MEZÖKÖVESD, HUNGARY. A TYPICAL STUD FARM, SHOWING MATYÓ HORSE BREEDERS RIDING THEIR STEEDS BARE-BACK

ETER

The people of the village gathered at the far end of the hall and watched us eat. In Budapest, if anyone watches you eat, you have an uncomfortable feeling that he is envying you, being himself hungry. The MezőKovesd villagers did not envy us in the least. They had all eaten, or were just about to eat excellent dinners of their own.

We were also attended by the village band, which stood quite close to the door and made as much noise as Hungarian gipsy bands always do. It was because of that band that I failed to find out why the party of ladies from the château had joined us. Conversation was totally impossible. All the lady next me and I could do was to press each other, with gestures of invitation, to drink more of the excellent wine which, distrusting the MezőKovesd mayor, she had brought with her in a basket.

After luncheon the leader of the band came over to me and made a speech in Hungarian, which my friend, the conductor of the party, translated. The band wished in compliment to us to play "God save the King," but unfortunately had never heard the tune. I signified politely that we would manage to get along for one day without our national anthem and that the band might consider themselves absolved of all suspicion of discourtesy. But this did not satisfy the bandmaster. He said that he and his fellows could and would play "God save the King" if I would be kind enough to whistle it through once for them. I cannot myself whistle any tune, but a member of our party offered his

services. He and the bandmaster retired to a corner together, and a few minutes later the band did play "God save the King," not very well, but here and there quite recognizably. It was an amazing performance.

After luncheon and the band, the village choir came and sang for us. I am told that the songs they sang were drinking songs. They reminded me rather of the performances of keeners in Ireland round the grave of the dead. If Hungarian wine produces no more cheering effect on the people than that suggested by these songs, it must be dull work drinking it. When the choir had exhausted itself we were marched off to church, and stood through some kind of short evening service on a floor strewed with fresh green rushes. Afterwards, in a square in the middle of the village, we had every opportunity of studying the gala costumes of the people.

The men wore small round hats, either black or green, with narrow brims and feathers sticking up in front or at the sides. Sometimes they had flowers as well as feathers. A black sleeveless jacket, open in front and cut as short as a boy's Eton jacket, shows underneath a very loose white shirt. Sometimes, as in the case of the mayor, this shirt is pleated. Sometimes it is covered with embroidery in gay colours. The sleeves of these shirts are very wide and often so long that they come down over the wrists. On the occasion of weddings and other very important events the lower part of the sleeve as well as the front is covered with embroidery. Trousers, which are

white, are very long, and the legs are so wide that the garments look like petticoats. They are elaborately pleated and sometimes covered with open-work embroidery. In front hangs an apron, usually of a dark colour, and on these aprons the embroiderer runs riot with bright coloured silks. The whole effect is gay, but the costume would be singularly uncomfortable to work in. That, however, is not what it is meant for; and, as we found out later on, neither the petticoat, trousers nor the apron interfere in the least with the wearer's activity in dancing.

An unmarried girl wears nothing on her head. A married woman, when you first see her, seems to be wearing a sun-bonnet. In reality her head-dress is not nearly so simple an affair as an English sun-bonnet. The foundation of it is a piece of stiff material of some sort which stands out over the forehead. On this is draped a head-shawl, like a very large handkerchief, gaily coloured. Sometimes a curious kind of cap, pointed at the back, is worn, with the object of making the head-shawl stick out behind. A full white chemisette is covered by a sleeveless bodice elaborately embroidered. Large numbers of petticoats are worn, which has the effect of making the skirt stick out all round as if it were stretched over a crinoline. When the wearer is walking, and especially walking fast, these petticoats have a curious swinging motion, something like that of a Highlander's kilt. Over the skirt is the inevitable apron, as rich in embroidery as the men's aprons are. The women wear high

boots, reaching to the knees, and these are often made of leather dyed crimson. Over the shoulders is always worn one of the handsome silk shawls, with coloured borders and corners, which have been mentioned before as characteristic of Hungarian garments.

We speak of this costume rather vaguely as a national peasant dress. In reality most of the details are local. Not only do the Transylvanian dresses differ widely from those of the Hungarians of the plain, but the dresses of some parts of the plain differ from those of another. The Hungarian Government before the war, conscious that the advance of newly learned fashions was beginning to destroy the peasant's instinct for beautiful dress, employed an artist to make coloured sketches of dresses all over the country. The result of his labours was the publication in several handsome volumes of a very large number of interesting and beautiful pictures of costume. The text of the book is in Hungarian, and it has not, so far as I know, been translated into any other language.

Here is a description by a Hungarian writer of two garments worn almost everywhere in the great Hungarian plain, the *suba* and the *szur*.

"The characteristic garments of the inhabitants of the great plain are the *suba* and the *szur*. The *suba* is a long cloak of skeepskin reaching to the ankles. It has no sleeves, and is simply thrown over the shoulders. Only when the weather is bad is the *suba* fastened in front. It is characteristic

A TYPICAL SHEPHERD DRESSED IN A SUBA ON THE GREAT PLAIN, HUNGARY

of this garment that the wool remains on the hide and is used as a lining. The outside, glossy tanned leather, is covered with hand embroidery. The *suba*, spread out flat, makes an almost complete circle, and thus laid out one can appreciate the richness and beauty of its embroidery. Outside this garment is yellow or greyish-yellow in colour. Round the shoulders a complete black sheepskin is sewed on for a collar. The shoulders, the back and the front of the *suba* are embroidered in cotton, though silk is used by better-off people. Roses, tulips and peacocks' feathers are the chief subjects of this embroidery. The *suba* is also adorned with rather gaudy decorated designs formed by little pieces of different-coloured leather sewn on.

"The *suba* is the best friend of the inhabitants of the plain, especially of the shepherd. He sleeps on it; he wraps himself in it on cold nights; he wears it when it rains; he even uses it as a screen when he wants to light a fire on a stormy day, and as a tablecloth when he eats his meals.

"The *szur* is also a cloak reaching to the ankles, but it is made of a kind of thick white felt and has sleeves. But the peasant never puts his arms into the sleeves. The ends of them are sewn up and they are used as pockets. The *szur* gives much more scope for the decorative talent of the Hungarian people than the *suba*. The everyday *szur* which the peasant wears during his work is, as might be expected, only slightly ornamented, perhaps with red, perhaps with black braid. But for high days and holy days there are very richly

embroidered *szurs*, some of them dating back to quite old times. The *szur* has an immense square collar from fifty to sixty centimetres long, which extends down each front as far as the ankles. It is this collar which carries most of the embroidery."

CHAPTER XV

THE GREAT PLAIN

HERE is a legend :—

Once upon a time there was a certain King Rad who ruled over Lombardy. He was a man of fierce temper and he had a long red beard. He conquered Pannonia, and after a while, when his kingdom extended, he made an alliance with Csörsz, the king who ruled over the people dwelling on the regions near the banks of the Tisza. Csörsz was as beautiful as Rad was hideous, and was young, whereas Rad was old. These two went forth together and conquered most of their neighbours. When they had conquered everyone there was to conquer, they held a great festival and fell to the work of dividing the spoil. Csörsz said he wanted no share of the booty—Rad might have it all. But he did want Rad's daughter, the beautiful Delibab, for his wife. This displeased Rad, who was plotting all the time to fall upon Csörsz and take his kingdom from him—a thing which a man cannot well do to his own son-in-law without giving rise to some scandal. At the same time it was difficult for him to refuse the request, particularly as Delibab rather liked the young king, who was, as has been said, very beautiful.

So what King Rad did was this. He said to King Csörsz: "You can have my daughter for your wife when you carry her home to your kingdom by ship."

By saying this he thought he had put an end to the project of the marriage, since it is impossible to sail or even row any kind of ship across the great plain of Hungary to the River Tisza, where Csörsz's kingdom was. But Csörsz was very much in earnest in his desire for the princess, and was not to be defeated by the difficulty of sailing a ship over several hundred miles of dry land. He went back to his kingdom, gathered all his subjects together and set them to dig a canal across the great plain of Hungary. Everyone was put to work—soldiers, old men, women and children. Csörsz himself rode about on a white stallion directing operations. Day by day the canal advanced; day after day Delibab sat in the palace of her father dreaming beautiful dreams about the prince who should come sailing along his canal and carry her off as a bride.

But the luck was all against the lovers. One night there came a thunderstorm and King Csörsz, who was watching the work on the canal, was struck by lightning. His people were sorry of course, for he was a very nice king, but in their hearts they did not believe that any princess in the world was worth that amount of digging, so they gave up the canal and went home.

Delibab, when she heard the sad news, died at once, which was quite the proper thing for her to do.

But that was not the end of Delibab. She still haunts the great plain of Hungary, seeking for her lover's grave. Men see her in dark clouds, racing across the sky with outstretched wings, and the drenching rain which follows is the weeping of poor Delibab for her lost love. In summer-time men see, beyond the plain at their feet, a great still lake, with trees ranged round it. But no birds sing in the branches of those trees and no oxen plough the fields beside the lake. This is mirage, say the wise; but the wiser know that by that lake Delibab broods over her eternal grief, still dreaming the sweet dream of the days when the canal was advancing mile by mile and her lover along with it.

Delibab is the haunting spirit of the great plain, the fairy figure which eyes see when they are lifted up. For here, as the people's proverb says, all things bow to the earth—the ears of corn which ripen and droop, the heads of beasts which graze and drink, the faces of the men who toil. From the earth come food and drink and life and joy; therefore all heads bend towards it, and there is only mirage and the fairy legends of old romance, only Delibab with the broken heart for those who straighten their stiff backs and look up.

M. Tharaud, whom I have quoted so much before, gives a vivid study of these men of the great plain, among whom, as he tells us, he lived much :—

"Here dwells a peasant, nobler than any other in the world, a man whose faults are lovable, even whose virtues are agreeable. He is a man of pride

and dominating will, full of a quiet contempt for all other people, so sure of his own superiority that he has no doubt that when God speaks in Paradise He speaks Hungarian. His is a hospitality which never asks the stranger or the guest 'Whence come you, or whose son are you?' It is enough for him that the man is a stranger within his gate and is willing to drink with him in friendly fashion. He is a silent man, silent to the point of being taciturn. Even when half drunk or wholly drunk he retains his dignity. Only in the cabaret, with wine before him, with the sound of the gipsy's fiddle in his ears, does he allow himself to express emotion. Then he lays his head on his hands and weeps with delight. 'The Hungarian peasant,' says the proverb, 'finds his amusement in weeping.' He has the temperament of a great lover and much of the poet's spirit in his heart. Like the Arab he can improvise love songs and poems, borrowing the images which express his passion from his rural life. He is vehemently fond of his horses, and delights in their complex shining harness. He loves his own fine clothes, all embroidered with tulips and roses. He loves pleasure. He loves dancing. He hates lies, and will quarrel with his best friend if that friend prove to be a liar. His chief complaint about the Germans and Jews is that they have brought deceit and trickery into his country. He is an obstinate man, very difficult to convince of anything, especially to convince that he is wrong. But once convinced he gives in gracefully without reserve. In his own home he is

something of a grumbler and is a severe head of a family. 'Money is good when it is counted and woman when she is beaten,' is one of his favourite sayings. His wife dare not be familiar with her husband, whom she always addresses as 'sir'; but she gets her own way in her housekeeping. He hates business, which in his opinion is only fit for Jews. He has no great liking for hard work. It is the duty of Providence to produce from the great plain the best wheat and the best apricots in Europe. Other vegetables may be left to the market gardener. The indolent and dreamy life of the shepherd is that which suits best the temperament of this man."

The life of the dwellers on the great plain is changing, and no doubt their characters are changing too. But change comes slowly amid the vast monotony of these endless steppes of pasture land. As gradual as the advance of King Csörsz's canal is the progress of modern ways and modern ideas in this country. Yet the change is coming. The old social distinctions of the plain are being obliterated as civilization passes from the pastoral to the agricultural stage. Once there were three classes. The *csikos* (horsemen) stood highest in the social order. They had the care of great troops of horses, wild creatures, liable to sudden terrors and stampedes, which set them galloping madly across the plain. After them, armed with the lasso and the whip, galloped the *csikos*, horsemen with the skill and daring of the cowboys of the American West. Next in order of precedence came the *gulyas*, who guard the herds of oxen which used to range at

will across the plain. These men, too had their share in the pleasures of galloping and rounding-up. Their charges, stung by a virulent kind of gad-fly, were liable to go mad and scatter in all directions. The *gulyas* with their long-handled whips drove the frenzied beasts back from their galloping. Last and least honoured was the shepherd, whose peaceful charges left him time to sit and sleep and dream through the length of the summer day.

These wandering herdsmen, moving from place to place in search of fresh pastures, carried with them their dwellings, like movable huts (*csérény*) which they set down always facing east. The shepherds also took with them movable folds, and had huge white dogs to fight the wolves which preyed on the flocks.

But all this life is vanishing, or has already vanished. The plough has invaded the pasture land. The labourer has taken the place of the galloping horseman and the dreaming shepherd. The *csérény* is a rare thing now. The people live in large villages, far larger than English villages are. The streets of these settlements are broad. There is no lack of land to cramp men in their building, nor any need of defence to force them within the narrow circles of walls. In the middle of the village stands the church, its spire surmounted by a cross or a cock, according to the faith—Catholic or Calvinist—of the community. The houses are all low and are built with their gable ends to the street—a fashion which gives the village a curious appearance of blindness. No

THE GREAT PLAIN OF HUNGARY, SHOWING CATTLE AT A WHEEL

windows open on the street; no faces peer out; nor doors stand wide for children to pass in or out. There is something suggestive of the East in this determination to keep the privacy of each family secure.

The marshes along the banks of the Tizsa have been drained, and the fishermen who plied their simple trade among them have disappeared. All is changing save the great plain itself. Still, over the wheat-field as over the prairie, the great silence broods. Still the sun rises as it does at sea, suddenly and everywhere at once over a shadowless landscape. Still miles and miles are stretched out before the eye, unbroken by hill or forest, until the very curve of the world itself forces an end on vision with a horizon line.

Only the watering-place of the flocks form landmarks. Over each well stands a tall pole, and across it, like the yard of the mast of a ship, swings an immense beam. This must surely be the most primitive machinery in the whole wide world for raising water. At the one end of the beam is a bucket; at the other is a weight so arranged that it balances, or almost balances, the bucket. When the beam is swung weight upwards the bucket goes down into the well; when the end with the weight on it is pulled down the bucket rises full of water and is emptied out into the troughs. This kind of well and apparatus is common in all parts of rural Hungary; but on the great plain it becomes a sort of centre of life. As in the days of Abraham, Jacob and Moses, the flocks and herds gather here

for watering in the evening-time. With the voices of the men who drive them mingle the lowing of oxen and the bleating of sheep. Above the crowds of beasts and men the tall pole and its swinging beam stand as a sort of heavenly pointing symbol of the life which the water gives.

It was the peasants of this great plain who broke the power of Bolshevism. Bela Kun's dream of a new intensely Semitic Jerusalem faded against the daylight of this simple life. It was in vain that he threatened and fulfilled his threats. The obstinate peasant remained obstinate in his visionless common sense. Budapest, with a granary at her gates, starved because it was found impossible to make the peasants understand the beauty of the Communist theory of life.

The Bolshevik Government in Budapest does not seem at first to have realized that the urban labourer cannot grow food but must eat it. In a properly organized world this painful fact would not, of course, be a fact. Food would just be there, like air, and nobody would have to bother about it; but during the transition stage between the old order and the new, rulers, even if they are men of vision like Bela Kun, are forced to recognize that food comes from the land. It must be bought: at least buying is the simplest and least troublesome way of getting it. Therefore Bela Kun made money, literally made it with a printing-press. It was very pretty money, but the peasant looked doubtfully at it: he was not quite sure that it was money. After a while, meditating on it in his

slow, stupid way, he decided that it was not real money and that he would be a fool to take it in exchange for his potatoes which were real. Budapest had to tighten its belt.

The Government tried eloquence and proclamations; it went on to decrees and appeals. Eloquence did not move the peasant at all; decrees did not frighten him. Arguments left him unaffected. The theories of Karl Marx and his disciples can be proved, are proved, by irrefutable process of reasoning, but the peasant could not be got to understand the reasoning. Budapest began to starve.

Requisitions were tried, but produced surprisingly little result. The urban labourer, though his pockets were bursting with money, could not buy an egg, because there were no eggs on sale. It was no use raising wages to fantastic heights when a whole month's wages, a ream or two of pretty paper, could not be exchanged for a single crust of bread. Budapest became very hungry indeed.

Then appeared on the scene the sinister figure of Tibor Szamuely. Born and brought up in a provincial town, he might have known, and thought he did know, the nature of the Hungarian peasant. With the kind of intellect common among half-educated degenerates, he thought he was the man to handle the situation. Bela Kun and his associates in Government thought so too. Szamuely found himself in command of a choice company of blackguards, very appropriately called "The Lenin Boys." He and his followers were armed to the

teeth and provided with an armoured train and a large red motor-car. Taking a sufficient supply of ropes suitable for hanging people, they set forth to persuade the Hungarian peasant to part with his food.

They failed, but it was not through any want of thoroughness. Hangings and shootings were frequent and abrupt. An Englishwoman, who was living at the time in a country house, told me of her surprise when, going out one morning, she found two men hanging from the arch of the gateway of her house. Szamuely and the Lenin Boys had arrived during the night, held a court, and—two swinging corpses blocked the gateway of the house. Like Jean qui Rit in *Quentin Durward*, Szamuely had a pretty turn of wit and liked to jest with the victims of his justice while he knotted the rope round their necks. He had the true degenerate's taste for the loathsome, and used to devise scenes which added something to the horror of death at his hands.

Like many men of his race, he had a fondness for sumptuous and garish clothes. He was always exquisitely, though a little floridly, dressed. He wore a monocle. He used to sit in a graceful attitude with his legs crossed and smoke cigarettes while he delivered judgment on those brought before his tribunal.

Such a man with such opportunities ought to have been able to supply Budapest with food. He did succeed in raiding and looting, but you cannot feed a whole city on the spoil of spasmodic

robberies. The peasant—it is an extraordinary evidence of his obstinacy—actually preferred being hanged to doing regular business with the friends of Bela Kun. Budapest starved.

The end of the whole business came suddenly amid so much confusion that it is very difficult to make out exactly what happened. But one or two things stand out clearly. Bela Kun, who was by no means a fool when his own safety was concerned, saw that the game was up, and made his escape, just in time, in a special train. The Roumanians had crossed the Tisza. The Czechs were at Miskolz. Nobody in Hungary felt the least inclined to go and fight them. A starving city proletariat is not the best material in the world for an army. The peasants probably preferred the Roumanians to the Lenin Boys.

Szamuely was overtaken by this Day of Judgment while in the act of presiding over one of his Courts in Győr. He was, we are told, in the very act of condemning to death three victims. The sentence was never pronounced. Szamuely left Győr abruptly and made all speed back to Budapest.

For some reason he declined to take the seat offered him in Bela Kun's special train. Perhaps he distrusted his fellow-Bolsheviks. Perhaps he thought it likely that some one would shoot at the train as it steamed away. He preferred to go off in a car by himself, whether his famous red car or another we are not told. At the Austrian frontier he was stopped by some Custom House officers, and inconvenient questions were asked.

Szamuely must have known that he was not a popular man. He guessed that his fate was certain as soon as it was known who he was. He anticipated the inevitable by blowing out his own brains.

His body—they had to get rid of it somehow—was buried in a scrap of waste land. On a stone over the grave someone scribbled these words in blue pencil:

Here perished a dog.

CHAPTER XVI

WESTERN HUNGARY

THE Danube, which flows almost due east through Vienna and Poszóny, turns suddenly a little way below Visegrád, and flows south for over a hundred and fifty miles. In the bend of the river is Western Hungary, with the great lake of Balaton in the middle of it.

Like every other part of Hungary, this district was conquered by the Turks and held by them during the whole period of their occupation. But it was never so completely conquered and was not so utterly desolated as the land east of the Danube. Hungary is nowhere rich in ancient buildings, but this district is less poor than most parts of the country. Even here, of course, the hand of the restorer has been at work, with effects hardly less lamentable than those of the destroying Turk. The wanderer will scarcely wish to make a series of troublesome little journeys for the sake of viewing the bits and scraps of ancient buildings which the pious restorers of modern times have spared.

He ought, however, to see the great Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma, both for the sake of seeing a fine pile of buildings and because of the great

historic interest of the abbey. It was the cradle of Hungarian Christianity.

It is not a very difficult place to get to. A train will take the wanderer to Győr, which the Germans call Raab—a pleasant little town built where the Raba joins the Little Danube. There is a church here which was built in the twelfth century, destroyed as usual, rebuilt in the seventeenth century, and restored, with embellishments, in the eighteenth. The zeal of the restorers left untouched some fine Belgian tapestry of the sixteenth century and a curious metal bust of St. Ladislaus. Győr has its place in history—chiefly military history. Arpad fought there. The Turks took the place. Nicholas Pallfy retook it for the Hungarians. The Turks took it again. Napoleon fought two battles there, and the French occupied it for a time. The wonder is that anything old survives in the place at all.

From Győr the wanderer makes his pilgrimage to Pannonhalma, a distance of fifteen or twenty miles. The monastery towers over the hills of the little village of GyörszentMarton, which the Germans call St. Matinsburg. It gets its name in both languages from the story that St. Martin, afterwards Bishop of Tours, was born there. This is interesting, if true. No kind of historical fact is more interesting than one which gives us a shock of surprise, and it is certainly startling to discover that British Christianity owes a great deal to a soldier-saint who was born in Hungary.

The monastery itself is a huge and very striking

building, with more than a suggestion of a fortress about its flanking towers. Probably it was necessary, in old times, to fortify the home of the most ancient, the richest and the most powerful monastic foundation in Hungary. Pannonhalma was founded some time in the tenth century by Geza, St. Stephen's father—though according to another story the Benedictines were already there and all he did was to build a church for them. The first abbot was Astrick, St. Stephen's friend and fellow-labourer in converting Hungary, who was afterwards an archbishop. St. Gellért, the bishop who was martyred in Buda, was one of the Benedictines of Pannonhalma.

The abbey church is a fine specimen of early Romanesque architecture—a kind which is rare in Hungary and only found west of the Danube. The main part of it was built early in the thirteenth century, but there are walls in the crypt which date back to the days of St. Stephen. It contains a throne, said to have been occupied by St. Stephen himself, and among its treasures is a cloak which belonged, or is supposed to have belonged, to that king.

Ever since its foundation Pannonhalma has been a home of that learning and culture which the world has learned to associate with the Benedictine Order. It possesses to-day a splendid library, a fine collection of coins and a natural history museum. It must have escaped to some extent the pillaging which was the usual fate of Hungarian religious houses elsewhere, for it still possesses documents of great antiquity, among them the original charter given the abbey by St. Stephen.

But it is not after all the library, the church or the towers of the great buildings which give its romantic interest to this ancient abbey of Pannonhalma. It is not only the fact that this was the cradle of Hungarian Christianity, as Glastonbury was of English. The wanderer stands in the great tower, under the cupola, and looks out far across a rich, wooded landscape. His imagination plays with the thought of all that these Benedictines did for Hungary, as indeed for most countries in Europe. They were the bringers and the fosterers of the arts of peace, the teachers of agriculture to wandering tribes, the drainers of bogs, the planters of fruit-trees, the builders of villages and towns. I do not know whether it was Hungary that Charles Kingsley had in his mind when he wrote a certain famous passage in a "Saint's Tragedy," the tragedy of a saint who was herself a Hungarian. But he certainly might have been writing about this country round Pannonhalma, for every word he wrote is true of these Benedictines.

Count Walter, no very willing witness to monastic virtue, speaks :—

> See that hollow;
> I knew it once all heath and deep, deep bog.
> I drowned a black mare in that selfsame spot,
> Hunting with your good father. Well he gave it
> One jovial night to six poor Erfurt monks—
> Six picked visaged wan, bird fingered wights—
> All in their rough hair shirts, like hedgehogs starved.
> I told them six weeks' work would break their hearts.
> They answered Christ would help and Christ's good Mother,
> And make them strong where weakest; so they settled
> And starved and froze.

Then King Lewis speaks, looking out over a land redeemed for civilization, as the wanderer looks out from the tower of Pannonhalma over rich fields and St. Martin's village at his feet. He speaks—

And dug and built it seems.

Count Walter, bluff hater of monks and their ways, but an honest man, makes answer :

Faith that's true. See. As a garden wall draws snails,
They have drawn a hamlet round, the slopes are blue,
Knee-deep in flax, the ordered boughs are bending
With strange outlandish fruits, by God's good help.
These men have made their ownership worth something.

As a statesman King Stephen did a wise thing for the country he loved when he built Pannonhalma, endowed it richly and encouraged the Benedictines to settle there. He did well to take the Abbot Astrick as his counsellor, and to make him, what I suppose he did make him, the chief ruler of Hungary under the king. But Stephen was a saint as well as a king, and the Benedictines aimed at something more than civilization. Here is their dream, the dream of the men who have inhabited Pannonhalma for nearly a thousand years. Kingsley puts it into the mouth of the monk Conrad :—

Build there cloud cleaving spires, beneath whose shade
Great cities rise for vassals ; to call forth
From plough and loom the rank unlettered hinds,
And make them saints and heroes, send them forth
To sway with heavenly craft the spirit of princes ;
Change nations' destinies and conquer worlds
With love more mighty than the sword.

In Pannonhalma, with the mighty buildings round us, with the fair land before us, with the great church beside us, we can imagine the fulfilment of that dream ; but—— The wanderer must wander on. He cannot spend all his time in meditating upon the saints. He wants to see, very properly and naturally wants to see, Lake Balaton, the largest lake in Hungary, indeed in southern Europe. It is fondly spoken of as the Hungarian sea ; but sea is certainly too grand a name to give to a lake fifty-one miles in length and never more than a mile and a half wide.

I went there first by train from Budapest to Siófok, which is a watering-place on the south side of the lake. This is the best way of going, because there are fast trains on that line, whereas the trains which run on the other side are exceedingly slow. Siófok is not the best place from which to see the lake. It is on the south shore, which is the flat shore of the lake, and it looks north. Nevertheless it is a popular resort, well supplied with villas and hotels—probably the long sandy shores are the attraction. It must be a desirable place for children in summer-time when the real salt sea is unattainable.

From Siófok a steamer crosses the lake to Füred. Before the war this steamer, and others like it, used to go up and down the lake touching at many piers ; now it is simply a ferry from Siófok to Füred. Lake Balaton is occasionally rough, quite as rough as the Solent can be, and very much in the same way : sometimes it is so rough that the steamer will not attempt the passage. But the

wise wanderer will choose a calm day, especially if he is liable to be sea-sick, and then this little voyage is very pleasant. On his left hand is the bold promontory of Tihany. On it, plainly to be seen from the steamer, is the Benedictine monastery in which the unfortunate Emperor Karl took refuge, or was shut up, after his last disastrous *putsch* for the Hungarian throne. It would have been a pleasant enough permanent refuge, much to be preferred to the miserable quarters in Madeira in which he was ultimately lodged. But I suppose it would not have done to leave him there. These exiled monarchs are dangerous people. However peaceably inclined they may be themselves, there are always others round them who want to put them on their thrones again, and it would have been very awkward for everybody if Tihany had become a centre of Hungarian Royalist plotting.

The full story of that attempt of the Emperor Karl to regain his throne will probably be told some day. So far as we know it now the *putsch* seems to have been a feeble affair. It did little except excite diplomatists and put Admiral Horthy, the Regent, into an exceedingly difficult position. The whole business ended in bathos. An Emperor sleeping on the cabin table in a very small, flat-bottomed English gunboat, which was carrying him down the Danube; an Empress making the best of a tiny cabin; a captain, British to the backbone and anxious to do the civil thing, seriously embarrassed by Imperial guests; Roumanians and Czechs snarling in the background; puzzled Hun-

garians wondering whether they had done the right thing: it was a poor last appearance, up to the present, of the House of Habsburg on the pages of history.

The monastery on the Tihany promontory has another claim to fame. Like most old monasteries in Hungary it was originally quite as much fortress as monastery; but unlike most of them it seems to have been an efficient fortress. It was one of the very few places in Hungary which the Turks never took. The Commandant—perhaps he was also the Abbot, but one hopes not—believed in terrorism in war as whole-heartedly as any German. The Turks were encamped on the far side of the lake and used to cross to Tihany on the ice, making raids for the purpose of capturing Hungarian women, though a monastery seems a bad hunting-ground for that particular game. Stephen Pisky, whether abbot or a mere soldier, used to sally out, capture Turks and then impale them.

The steamer reaches Füred and lies alongside a long wooden pier. I have written Füred and Siófok, but according to the Hungarian use the names are not so short and easy as these. All places along the shores of the lake take Balaton as a sort of surname, prefixed to their own name: Balaton-siófok, Balatonfüred, Balatonalmadi, Balatonföldvar, and so on. In Hungary the surname always comes before the Christian name, e.g. Hunyadi János, where we should write John Hunyadi. And a married woman adds "ne" to her husband's Christian name instead of using the prefix "Mrs."

Thus Mrs. Paul Brown, if she had a Hungarian visiting-card, would print on it "Brown Pálne."

Füred, or Balatonfüred, is a pleasant place when you get there. It is wholly given over to visitors—appears indeed to have no reason for its existence except the entertainment of visitors. It has certainly succeeded in making itself attractive. A hydropathic establishment which is really an hotel, and an hotel which is more or less a hydropathic establishment, stand looking at each other on opposite sides of the fine square. Between them, in a little temple, is a spring, whose waters, if drunk regularly before breakfast, cure, or are supposed to cure, something. All wise summer resorts ought to provide a spring of this sort and set it in a temple. The number of people who want to be cured is enormous, and they like to do the thing with dignity and appropriate ritual.

Round the hotels, or hydropathic establishments, are groves of trees, intersected with paths laid out for those who like quiet walks. The woods reach right down to the shores of the lake, and an extremely agreeable promenade is laid out under their shade. There are excellent arrangements for bathing. A notice, placed in the square outside the hotels, tells visitors what the temperature of the water is every day. When it is warm enough visitors go down to the bathing-place, walk out along a wooden pier, undress in little huts like Swiss châlets, and plunge off spring-boards into deep water. If they are less adventurous they climb down wooden steps into shallow water. Near

the bathing-place is the clubhouse of the Balaton Lake Sailing Club, with trim yachts lying at their moorings. The lake, when you know it, is an excellent place for sailing, but you must know it. There are great stretches of it which look deep but are really very shallow, and of course if you run aground it is no use hoping for a rising tide to float you off again.

At the north-east corner of the lake is Balatonalmadi, the prettiest of all the Balaton watering-places. In time it is likely to become one of the most popular, for the hills on which its villas are perched command the most exquisite views of the lake. It is, I think, the place I should choose if I wanted to spend the summer months on the shores of Lake Balaton—and there are much worse spots for a holiday.

The fishing on Lake Balaton is famous, because it is there that the *fogas* is caught. I have mentioned this fish before. The Hungarians are very proud of it and regard it as the best of all fish to eat. It is not that. But I am quite prepared to believe that it is a good fish to catch. Unfortunately the fishing of the whole lake has been acquired by a company, and the stray visitor has no chance of sport. Before the coming of the company with its steam trawlers, the fishing was a more or less haphazard affair, conducted by local fishermen who used their own peculiar nets, and, in the shallower parts of the lake, harpoons.

In winter, when the lake is frozen, the fishing used to be conducted in a very curious manner.

TRANSPORTING WINE IN HUNGARY

Holes were hacked in the ice at regular intervals, the whole series forming a square. The net was poked down through one of the holes, and by means of long poles pushed to the next one, and so on. It was then dragged up with immense labour and found to contain "an incredible number of fish." That is the description given of this method of fishing, but I confess that I do not in the least understand it. The immense labour I am prepared to believe in. The incredible number of fish is—well, any number of fish caught by poking a net about with poles would be incredible.

I have never heard of any attempt to develop Lake Balaton as a resort for winter sports, but at certain times, before the ice is broken up and becomes hummocky, there is miles of good skating, and ice-boat sailing is beginning to be practised there.

Besides its fish the Balaton district is famous for its wines. The Romans found out that the soil was particularly suitable to vines, and planted the shores all round the lake. The rocks are basaltic, and the soil, especially on the Tihany promontory, is volcanic. Anyone who knows Italy will remember that wines of very good flavour come from grapes grown on volcanic soil. The *Lachrima Christi* of the Vesuvian slopes and the nameless wines of the Lipari Islands are examples. Tokay, the best of the Hungarian wines, is grown on volcanic soil, though not near Lake Balaton. One of the most delicious light wines I ever tasted was given me at Balatonalmadi by the fortunate pro-

prietor of a vineyard there. I had struggled hard to find his house, and had climbed a steep hill to get to it. The day was hot. He set me in a comfortable chair on a broad, shaded balcony with a glorious view of the sunlit lake below me. Then he poured out for me wine of his own making. Almost anything would have tasted good then and there. But that wine did not owe its delightfulness to any accident. It would have been good anywhere.

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CHAPTER XVII

THE LOST PROVINCES

THERE is a story told of an English student who was asked by an examiner what he knew about Budapest. He replied :

" Budapest, otherwise called Bucarest, is a town in Asia Minor."

That student was a little, but perhaps not very much, more ignorant of the geography of Eastern Europe than most Englishmen. I have often had letters addressed to me : " Budapest, Austria," which was perhaps excusable, though no Hungarian would like it. But " Budapest, Czecho-Slovakia," which used to appear on my envelopes occasionally, is the kind of howler which is positively irritating, because it could only be made by someone who prided himself on his up-to-date knowledge. Czecho-Slovakia has not been ten years in existence, and although a good deal of Hungary has been transferred into that State, Budapest has not.

There are, I imagine, but few Englishmen who could say offhand, without consulting a map, exactly what territory Hungary lost under the Treaty of Trianon, and who succeeded to the ancient possessions of the Magyars. I can quite imagine an intelligent wanderer taking up this

book, reading it through and feeling disappointed when he finished it because it contains no account of Transylvania and no chapter on sport in the High Tatra. I cannot be blamed for such omissions. Transylvania is not in Hungary any more. It has been moved into Roumania. The Carpathians have gone to Czecho-Slovakia. Croatia is under the rule of the Serbs, and—oddest of all—a few Hungarian counties have been handed over to Austria.

The ordinary Englishman knows nothing and cares nothing about all this. To the Hungarian the loss of his patrimony is a burning wrong, a horrible disaster, a crying injustice, an outrage against civilization, and he believes that the whole world is ringing with the tale of it. Nothing surprises and bewilders him more than to discover that the Englishman, whom he regards as his particular friend, actually does not know what has happened.

I suppose that some partition of Hungary was inevitable after the war. Serbia, assaulted, battered, desolated, deserved some reward for her persistent gallantry. Even the Hungarians admit that. The Serb, from the Hungarian point of view, is a barbarian, a peasant, low down in the scale of civilization. But the Serb is, admittedly, a fine fighting man. Even the Magyar gentleman recognizes in the Serb a foe worthy of his steel and a man whom he can respect. This respect mitigates the feeling of bitterness caused by the loss of Croatia. Besides, Croatia never was a pleasant country to rule. For

centuries it has been a sort of Southern Ireland to the Hungarians, an impossible country which does not know what it wants and declines to be happy till someone else finds out. It is really almost pleasant to watch another nation trying to govern a country of that sort. The news of Croatian discontent—and this is a fairly constant kind of news—is received with subdued chuckling in Budapest. "The Croatians were always kicking against us," they say. "Well, they've got rid of us now and they don't seem any happier. The Serbs wanted Croatia. They don't appear to be particularly pleased now they've got it."

The loss of Fiume is a more serious thing. The Hungarians made Fiume and made it well. Under them it was rapidly becoming, if it had not actually become, the chief commercial port of the Adriatic. Now, the grass is growing in the streets and the great cranes rusting beside quays to which ships no longer come. These are bitter things to see. But the bitterness is mitigated by the fact that the Serbs, who could not use the port, had to give a bit of it up to the Italians, who do not seem to be able to do much with it either. The flamboyant swash-buckling of an Italian poet took some of the sting out of Hungary's loss, so pleasant it is to see other people making themselves ridiculous. And comic relief for Hungary's pain is daily afforded by the present preposterous condition of Fiume. It is difficult to maintain an attitude of tragic grief in the face of the spectacle of two sets of sentries glaring at each other across a muddy

ditch, while at each end of a miserable little bridge splendidly uniformed officials solemnly examine the market baskets of poor old women, lest someone should smuggle something from a back street of a second-rate town into a lane-way in one of its suburbs.

Curiously enough the Hungarians do not very bitterly resent the loss of the three counties which were given over to Austria. Yet of all the awards made by our treaty-makers this seems the least justifiable. That Serbia should be rewarded is right. Serbia fought for the Allies and Serbia suffered. That Roumania should be rewarded is at least intelligible. Roumania put herself up to auction at a critical period in the war, and Transylvania was the price we promised to pay for her aid. She did, on her part, produce an army. It immediately ran away, but that did not absolve us from paying the promised price. The Czechs, I suppose, rendered us more or less valuable help by being thoroughly disloyal to their own side, and so they had to be rewarded—like the Serbs and the Roumanians—at the expense of Hungary. But why should Austria be given new territory? Austria was, after all, just as much an enemy nation as Hungary was. No doubt there were reasons for this extraordinary transmission of territory. There must be reasons for everything that happens, outside of lunatic asylums, but it is sometimes very hard to find out what they are.

In saying that the Hungarians do not feel very

bitterly about the parts of their country which have been handed over to the Serbs and Austrians, I do not mean that they are indifferent about these losses. A Hungarian will grow eloquent to the point of tears about them. But his feelings are feeble, as water to wine, compared to his passionate resentment of the loss of Transylvania and his northern, Carpathian, provinces.

There are several reasons for this; some sentimental, some political, some practical and economic.

As I have said, the Hungarians have a good deal of respect for the Serbs as fighters, and they regard the Austrians as a civilized people. For the Roumanians and Czechs they have not a good word to say on either count. The Roumanians—I am giving the current Hungarian opinion—are not only cowards. They are degenerates, so degenerate that the officers in their army powder their noses, publicly, in restaurants. They do not wash, except in scent, and, scent being expensive, they must use the same basinful over and over again for perhaps a week or a fortnight. These and other details of the manners and habits of the Roumanians the Hungarians learnt while the Roumanian army occupied Budapest. The stories told of Roumanian morals are scarcely to be repeated, certainly not to be printed in a decent book. But what angers the Hungarians most is that their beloved Transylvania should have been handed over to a nation which is on a distinctly lower level of culture. The Roumanians looted freely

while they were in Budapest, for which it is difficult to blame them. Their country had been looted very thoroughly a little while before by the Hungarians. But the Roumanians took things like machines, which were no good to them because they were not sufficiently educated to use them. This, not the mere looting, is what gives bitterness to the Hungarian grievance. Good machines, of which the Hungarians used to make good use and of which they might be making good use to-day, are rusting in uselessness now because the Roumanians who carried them off do not know what to do with them.

I have this story from the lips of a Hungarian civil servant of high standing. It illustrates very well the opinion commonly held in Hungary about Roumanian culture:

A Roumanian once entered an hotel in Kolozsvár, the capital of Transylvania. He ordered dinner. The waiter either could not or would not understand Roumanian and replied to the General in Magyar. The General, much irritated, sent for another waiter. This man also declined to speak anything except Maygar. The General flew into a passion and sent for the proprietor of the hotel.

"You must understand," he said, "that you are now Roumanian subjects, and it is your duty to speak the Roumanian language. You ought to have waiters who speak Roumanian. Why haven't you?"

"Sir," replied the hotel keeper, "we once had a Roumanian waiter, but as soon as we had taught

him to read and write he went back to be a professor in one of your universities."

Either Roumanian generals are men of singularly mild temper, or that story is not true. Any ordinary general would kill a man for far less insolence. I like to think, I even cherish a hope, that general was a very gentle man, for I want the story to be true. It is too good to have been merely invented.

That—I cannot express it any better—is the opinion the Hungarians have of the Roumanians, and, if there is any difference, they think rather worse of the Czechs.

So much for the sentimental objection to the loss of these provinces.

From the political point of view the Hungarians assert that Transylvania and the Carpathian provinces are Hungarian in spirit and inhabited chiefly by men of the Magyar race. They produce most impressive figures in support of the latter assertion. Here is a specimen. In Kolozsvár there are 50,704 Magyars and only 1,676 Roumanians. On which of the principles professed by democracy, they triumphantly ask, should such a city be handed over to the Roumanians? Is the will of the majority to go for nothing? If so, what happens to the democratic idea of majority rule? The delightful thing about this argument—and it is repeated about dozens of other towns—is that the Hungarians are not democrats, and are the only people in Europe who have the nerve to say so. The English and French, who handed over Kolozsvár

to the Roumanians, believe, or at least say they believe, in democracy, and hold the majority rule to be a sacred thing.

But the argument is not quite as good as it sounds. It is perfectly true that almost every town in the Carpathians, every single town of any size in Transylvania, is Magyar. But the same thing is not true of the country districts, which in Transylvania are chiefly inhabited by Roumanians, and in the Carpathians by men of a variety of other races. If it came to counting heads in town and country together, the Magyars would be in a minority. But, though the most enlightened nations do it, counting heads is really a silly way of settling anything, because heads differ so much in their contents.

Another point, also political, which the Hungarians raise is that the Roumanians and Czechs are ruling their new provinces extremely badly, bullying everyone who is not a Roumanian or a Czech. I was present one day in the Hungarian House of Commons during a debate into which the condition of Transylvania was dragged, as it is dragged into most debates. One speaker told a story which was received with shouts of indignant and scornful laughter :

The Magyars in Transylvania opened a subscription list with the object of providing relief for those of their fellow-countrymen who were reduced to destitution by Roumanian oppression. Among the subscribers was a bishop, a modest man who gave his very substantial mite without advertising

his name. He called himself "St. Anthony" on the list of subscribers. The Roumanians suspected that the money was being collected for political purposes—they were probably right there—and issued orders for the arrest of all the principal subscribers. They made out a warrant for the arrest of "St. Anthony" among others. Considering that there are at least two saints of this name, the Roumanians might very well have heard of one of them, though it must be urged in excuse for them that the subscription list was made out in Hungarian, and names do take odd forms in that language. Few of us, for instance, would recognize Alexander under the form of Sandor.

This is an example of the sort of oppression which goes on under the government of the Roumanians and that of the Czechs.

The Czechs and Roumanians bring the same sort of charges against the Magyars, saying that when the disputed provinces were in their hands they also bullied everybody except their own people. As the Magyar rule came first in order of time, the Czechs and Roumanians got in with their story before the Magyars had any story to tell, and captured the ear of every sentimentalist in Western Europe who was interested in nationalities. The unfortunate Hungarians had a bad name before they came into court with their story. The fact appears to be that whoever is in power bullies, and always has bullied, those out of power, and generally with a good deal of justification. People

out of power in Eastern Europe are always inclined to be rebels. Whether the Czech and Roumanian bullying now is any worse than the Hungarian bullying was thirty years ago is very difficult to decide. All that we can say with any feeling of confidence is that we have not stopped the bullying by handing over Transylvania to the Roumanians or the Carpathians to the Czechs. All that we have done is to turn the bullied into the bullies, which is perhaps the net result, occasionally the actual aim, of all political changes and revolutions.

A dear old lady, puzzled by what was going on in Ireland in 1920, consulted her gardener about the meaning of it all.

"What," she asked, with perplexed simplicity, "are these Sinn Féiners aiming at? What is it they really want?"

"What they want, ma'am," said the gardener, "is this: that us should be you's, and you's should be us."

That has been achieved in the Hungarian lost provinces. The "you's," a ruling race, are now the "us," a ruled race, and they do not like it. The "us," once subject nationalities, who made the hearts of sentimentalists everywhere bleed with the story of their wrongs, are now the "you's," and are giving ample occasion to a fresh school of champions to defend the cause of a new "oppressed race."

Roughly speaking, the old Hungary consisted of a vast central plain with its surrounding mountains.

The economic situation was simple and wholesome. The dwellers in the plain supplied the people in the mountains with the wheat and beef they wanted ; the people in the mountains supplied the dwellers in the plain with wood from their forests and coal from their mines. There you had an economically stable society with every chance of prosperity.

The new Hungary consists of a great fertile plain. The surrounding mountains are in the possession of other peoples. Since the mountain-dwellers still want corn and the people in the plain still want wood and coal, it might be supposed that things would go on very much as before, in spite of the efforts of Boundary Commissioners. Eact set of people would exchange what they had too much of for what they cannot supply for themselves. If nations were sane, even as sane as the individuals who compose them, this is what would have happened and would be happening at the present moment. Trade would flow on briskly, as it did in the old Hungary before the war, and everybody would be just as well off as then. But nations are not sane. The first and most enduring impulse of every Government in Eastern Europe is to put a definite stop to any trade with its neighbours. This is done by means of tariffs and laws against export. Where even the highest tariff and the strictest laws fail to stifle trade, Governments fall back on complicated juggling with money, and money is the only means by which trade can be carried on.

Thus, a manufacturer in Budapest agreed to supply a customer in Transylvania with something which the manufacturer could make and the customer wanted. So earnest were these two men in their desire to do business with each other that they fought their way through the Hungarian Government's objection to allowing exports and the Roumanian's Government's tariff on imports. They actually struck a bargain. In due time the manufacturer had his goods ready to export. The customer had his money ready to pay. What could be simpler than to write a cheque and send off the packing-cases? But no. The Hungarian Government said to their man: "You must not receive this money. It must be paid to us and we will give you what we think the Roumanian cheque is worth." The Roumanian Government said to their man: "We cannot have you paying money over to the Hungarian Government. We don't believe that they would give it to the manufacturer at all. They would keep it themselves and spend it either on propaganda or soldiers, both intended to injure us."

The situation resolved itself into a deadlock. The manufacturer had his goods on his hands, and they were no use to him; the Transylvanian (who is now a Roumanian) had his money, which was no good to him because he couldn't buy what he wished with it. Each wanted what the other had got, but the exchange could not be effected.

That is what I meant by saying that nations are

seldom sane, though the individuals who compose them generally are.

But even if all the Governments concerned were perfectly sane, enormous difficulties would exist owing to the way in which the boundary lines between the new States have been drawn. What is to be the future of a place like Estergom, where the town is in Hungary, its railway station in Czecho-Slovakia, and someone has blown up the bridge which leads from the one to the other? How are Pécs and Szeged to get on? Both these towns are in Hungary, but the railway which joins them crosses the frontier twice. Pécs has coal, and Szeged has factories which want coal. By the natural route these places are about eighty-five miles apart, but you cannot send coal by that route, for it would have to pay an import duty each time it crossed the frontier. The only way of getting coal from Pécs to Szeged is via Budapest, a journey of five hundred miles or so. What are we to think of the position of the miners in Salgo Tarjan, whose houses are in Czecho-Slovakia, whose seam of coal runs under Czecho-Slovakian soil, but the entrance of whose pit is in Hungary? They have to present a passport, properly *viséd*, every morning when they go to work and every evening when they return.

Such are the Hungarians' main objections—sentimental, political and economic—to the partition of their country. But there are others. The Roumanians found that the great landowners of Transylvania were all members of the Hungarian

aristocracy, and the Transylvanian Magyar nobles were of all Hungarians the most patriotic, the least likely of any to acquiesce quietly in foreign rule. It was obvious, in the interests of Roumania, that they must cease to be great landowners. Land laws, framed ostensibly in the interests of peasant proprietors and redolent of the best principles of democracy, were easily made, and were made. The great Magyar landowners were reduced to the position of petty proprietors.

The Czechs were face to face with the same difficulty; but they had the advantage of being a republic, whereas Roumania is a kingdom. They deprived the Hungarian nobility, not only of the greater part of their property, but also of their titles. You must not now address a letter to the Countess A., if she happens to be a Hungarian countess resident in Czecho-Slovakia; you must address your envelope simple Madame A., if you wish it to reach her. This is a small matter, less important by far than the loss of property, but it is irritating.

It is not to be supposed that anyone in Western Europe, or even any considerable number of Hungarian people, is profoundly moved by the losses sustained in purse or dignity by this portion of the aristocracy. But the men and women who have actually suffered the losses are a good deal moved, especially the women. The one thing which tends to spoil the pleasure of social intercourse with these very charming ladies is that they cannot be kept from talking about their grievances. No matter

where a conversation starts it will work round in ten minutes to the tale of sufferings at the hands of Roumanians and Czechs; and that tale, after being told twenty times, becomes tiresome, especially as the details are always the same. That the details are the same is a fact which, though tiresome, deserves to be noted. The story scarcely varies at all. It may be taken, therefore, as substantially true.

Though the wrongs of these nobles leave the rest of the Hungarians comparatively cold, the sufferings of another class of the community has excited widespread indignation. The territory which Hungary lost included two university towns, Pozsóny and Kolozsvár. The first passed into the hands of the Czechs, the second went to the Roumanians.

Pozsóny was a very ancient university, having been founded originally by King Matthias, but its existence was intermittent. The Turks suppressed it during their occupation, and it did not revive again until the eighteenth century. Now it has ceased to exist as a Hungarian University. The teaching staff could not submit to regulations made by the Czech Government. The students were perfectly determined not to be turned into young Czechs by a system of education to which they strongly objected. The university was moved to Pécs. But a university is not an easy thing to move. Buildings must be left behind—so must libraries, laboratories and many other things. There is also the question of the breach of tradition; but in this matter Pozsóny University has been

fortunate in its new home. Pécs has traditions—university traditions—of its own. There was once a university there—the earliest of Hungarian universities, founded by King Louis the Great. Its students took up arms in defence of their country against the Turks, and fell in such large numbers at the Battle of Mohács that the Turks had little difficulty in destroying the rest of the university. Pozsóny has, at all events, a fine inheritance of university patriotism in its new home.

Kolozsvár University was originally founded by Stephen Bathory in the sixteenth century, while he was Prince of Transylvania, before he became King of Poland. It had a chequered career, descending at one time to the level of a grammar-school, not becoming the real centre of Transylvanian university life until 1871. It had, therefore, less to lose than Pozsóny by a breach of local tradition when it was moved to Szeged. But its loss in other ways has been severe. Since the war Hungary has been too poor to build homes fit for universities, too poor to re-establish libraries, too poor to afford, even in Budapest, a proper supply of the learned publications of other nations. All this makes the work of these universities in their new homes very difficult.

But worst of all is the loss of students. Transylvanian young men and young women do not want to go to Szeged. They prefer, since they must leave home, to seek the education they desire in Budapest. They have flocked into the capital, and, since there is no room for them there and no

work for those who have to support themselves, they lead lives of really desperate hardship. I doubt whether even the lowland Scots of the last century made greater sacrifices for the sake of getting an education. But these Hungarian boys and girls are most seriously in earnest, and they work extraordinarily hard. I remember talking to a number of Transylvanian students one evening in a sort of club, a terribly over-crowded and under-heated room, which they had established for themselves in Budapest. They wanted me to tell them about the life of students in English universities. I did my best in French, which I talk badly, through the medium of an interpreter, who understood French even worse than I talked it. I fear that their ideas about English university life were not very clear when I had finished. But they had got hold of one fact—to them a most astonishing fact: The English undergraduate spends about half his time playing games. To these young Transylvanians it was almost incredible that a man who might be attending lectures or reading in a library should actually prefer playing cricket. They, poor fellows! neither had, nor would take if they could get it, any time at all for games. I tried to explain to them that, according to our ideas, games are a most important part of education. I even tried to explain—but here I certainly failed—that our average undergraduate, though they would beat him easily in any examination, is better educated than they are. That was quite incomprehensible—necessarily so to people who have adopted the

belief that education can be tested in the examination-room.

But however wrong the Hungarians may be about what education is, there is no doubt whatever about their earnestness in getting something out of their universities. It was my privilege to give a course of lectures in Budapest University. My subject was "English Literature during the Victorian Period"—not a very attractive subject to young Hungarians, certainly not "a bread-and-butter subject," and I warned them carefully that nothing I said would be of any use in dealing with examination papers. Moreover, I lectured in English. To my amazement I had large classes and my students were astonishingly keen. They used to come to me afterwards clamouring for books or the names of books on every sort of subject which I happened to touch in the course of my discursive talks. Their parents, of whom I met a few, were just as keen as the students were.

A people which is possessed by this kind of hunger for knowledge has certainly a future before it, though the future would be brighter if the Hungarians did not take themselves and knowledge quite so seriously as they do. Even the national over-estimate of the value of mere knowledge is evidence of a kind of vitality which no misfortunes can permanently destroy. It may be true—is true, I think—that the Hungarian boy would grow into a better man if he spent less time over his books and more time in the football field, if he took success and failure in examinations a little less

gravely than he does. But the fact that he is desperately in earnest about getting his mind filled with facts, and that all his pastors and masters, governors, teachers, elders and betters are determined that he shall have every possible encouragement in this ambition, this gives hope for the future of Hungary.

The nation has suffered in the past worse evils than those of the present, and has risen superior to them. It may well be that Hungary will once more triumph over misfortune.

O passi graviora dabit Deus his quoque finem.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FUTURE

NO one, I suppose, believes that the present settlement of Eastern Europe will last very long. Tied up by various promises and agreements made during critical stages of the war—promises which could not be publicly acknowledged—the statesmen of the victorious Entente were forced to do things which they can scarcely have believed to be wise. Swept out of the regions of common sense by the tide of American sentimentalism which flowed over Europe during the apotheosis of President Wilson—each wave of the tide a high-sounding phrase—people were ready to approve of anything which was labelled "Self-Determination" or could be regarded as an assertion of the divine right of "small nationalities" to be troublesome to other people. It seems scarcely to have occurred to anyone that the extinction of Montenegro was a curious way of supporting small nationalities, or that Croatia's cession to Jugo-Slavia was a queer example of self-determination.

It was against all antecedent probability that a settlement so made should be stable. The facts of the present situation make it plain—the more they are studied the plainer it appears—that the map

of Central Europe must be re-drawn in the near future. The danger is that a new settlement will be reached by way of another war—a war which it will be almost impossible to localize. Too many of the Great Powers are interested in the position of Eastern Europe. France, with her elaborate system of alliances, is vitally interested. Germany is interested because France is. What happens in the Adriatic hinterland is of the utmost importance to Italy. There will be need of very wise statesmanship if the mischief done by the post-war treaties is to be undone again without more bloodshed.

What is to be Hungary's fate ?

It is plainly impossible that Hungary should be left as Hungary is now. The present boundaries were fixed on no principle—economic, national, racial, or geographical. There is nothing which makes for security and firmness. The Magyars cannot acquiesce in an arrangement which strangles their commerce, which leaves three million of their people—Magyar in blood, language and national instinct—at the mercy of foreigners, whose rule is harshly oppressive, which sets up an irritating chain of frontier posts where no natural lines of division exist. So far as Hungary is concerned only two things are possible. Either the work of the Treaties must be logically completed and Hungary wiped off the map altogether by some partition like those which extinguished Poland for a time ; or Hungary must be restored to a position in which a self-respecting and prosperous national life is possible.

Which is it to be ?

The answer, I suppose, depends more on Hungary herself than on any of the encircling band of hostile neighbours ; certainly more than it does on the fine-drawn policies of Western peoples.

If Hungary can maintain her sense of nationality, and if her spirit remains unbroken, it can scarcely be doubted that she will achieve once more a tolerable position. We have Balkanized the whole of Eastern Europe, and we must look for a progress of events after a Balkan fashion—that is to say, things will happen abruptly, passionately, unreasonably. We search in vain for any unifying, peace-making principle on which to work, for any idea which will, so to speak, make sense of the whole thing. We are like workers on a jigsaw puzzle, laboriously fitting bits and scraps together when there is in existence no picture into which the scraps can be combined. It is as if a million particles were in constant motion while the law of crystallization has been suspended. Prophecy based on a knowledge of what always and inevitably happens is impossible. Nothing is inevitable ; nothing is certain. Out of such a state of things it is likely that sooner or later Hungary's opportunity will come. A war, a revolution or two, a wave of Bolshevism, an unusually startling act of aggression—any of the countless actions which determine the course of events in the Balkans—might give Hungary her opportunity. Then the future depends on herself, on the ability of her rulers, and, above all, on her own spirit.

Eastern Europe during and since the war has produced a number of able politicians and some men who deserve to be called statesmen. No one will deny, for instance, that President Masaryk and M. Benes have shown brilliant ability in their management of that fractious infant, the Czecho-Slovakian Republic. The rulers of Hungary have been men of less showy quality. The Regent, Admiral Horthy, and the Prime Minister, Count Bethlen, are neither of them men who anyone would describe as brilliant ; but they possess great strength of character of a quiet kind, and have shown wisdom in the management of their country's affairs. They have been content to move slowly—sometimes very slowly. They have steadily refused to be tempted into the dangerous paths of adventure. Their difficulties have been enormous. Feebler men would either have sunk under the weight of them or would have been driven by desperation into some gambler's hazard. If there is to be a resurrection of Hungary, much of the credit of it will belong to these two men.

But no statesmanship, however wise, can save a people which has not the heart to be saved, and in the end all depends on the spirit of the Hungarians themselves.

I venture to quote on this subject two paragraphs from Mr. Lothrop Stoddard's *Racial Realities in Europe*. I know no more competent and detached observer of European affairs than he is, and his words on a subject like this carry weight :

" Austria and Hungary have alike passed through

terrible times since the war. Austria rapidly collapsed into bankruptcy and the impoverishment of her city population, as Germany is now doing. Hungary had an even worse experience. She was cursed with a Bolshevik revolution, which developed into a bloody reign of terror and ended with a combined counter-revolution and foreign intervention, leaving her half-ruined and wholly disorganized. Though alike affiicted by misfortune, it is interesting to observe how different are the attitudes of the two peoples, the Austrian-Germans being apparently broken in spirit, whereas the Magyar spirit is most emphatically unbroken. This difference in attitude is due partly to racial differences and partly to the fact that the Austrian-Germans never possessed a real national consciousness, while the Magyars have been a true nationality for centuries.

"Unlike Austria, Hungary was one of the first States in Europe to acquire a national consciousness. Hungary's national life runs back for a thousand years, and its people feel an intense national patriotism. The Magyars are an unusually high-spirited folk. The fierce, warlike blood of their nomad ancestors still runs hot in their veins, and, despite extensive intermarriage, the Magyar stock differs perceptibly from the other Central European. It is really extraordinary to see how boldly the Magyars confront misfortune! Partitioned, impoverished, burdened with debts and war indemnities, disarmed by the Peace Treaties and surrounded by watchful enemies, the Magyars grimly refuse to resign them-

selves to their present fate, and sternly resolve to right the wrongs inflicted on them. High and low, rich and poor, noble and peasant, the Magyars denounce the Peace Treaties and swear to obtain their revision one way or the other."

Mr. Stoddard is perfectly right. Neither defeat in the war nor anything that followed—the Bolshevism, the insulting Roumanian occupation, the drastic severity of the Peace Treaties—availed to break the spirit of this people. The traveller is not an hour in Budapest before he sees evidences of this. Everywhere—on the walls of offices, in the windows of shops, on the advertisment hoardings, on the postcards which are sold—there are maps of Hungary as she was and as she is to-day. Everywhere are the words, "Nem, nem, sohar!" ("No, no, never! This is unendurable!") On the door of every house and every flat the words stand out stamped on metal plates. You cannot go in or out, walk or travel by rail or tram, without being brought face to face with this proclamation of a determined spirit.

I spent a part of one Christmas Eve in helping —or rather in watching, for I could help very little—in an entertainment given by some charitable ladies to the prisoners in a jail. There was a Christmas-tree, prettily decked, and a representation of the Nativity scene—touching and simple. There was a very frugal feast. Some Christmas carols were sung. But over the whole festivities hung a listless, apathetic sense of gloom. The men and women for whom the entertainment was

provided were prisoners. They were ranged under the eyes of their warders along a stone-walled, stone-paved corridor. The Christmas candles on the tree at the end of it, the children dressed up as shepherds and angels, the music of the carols, failed to rouse them. We reached the last item on our little programme—a song. It was sung by the choir which had sung before; but its reception was curiously different from that of any carol. There was a quickening of spirit round us, an emotional intensity not to be mistaken. The long ranks of prisoners—hopeless, helpless, apathetic derelicts of humanity—were moved. The song was that creed which I have already quoted, which one hears everywhere in Hungary:

> I believe in one God. I believe in one Fatherland.
> I believe in the resurrection of Hungary.

A country whose "jail-birds" feel thus, whose thieves and drunkards, whose half-imbecile prostitutes are alive to the hope of the resurrection of Hungary, is a country with an unbroken spirit.

And yet:

I sat one afternoon in the pleasant room of a Hungarian lady and listened while she talked to me about the wrongs of her country and her own experiences during the terrible time when Bela Kun ruled Budapest. One evening she and her mother were together in the room in which we then sat. They were without a fire, though the weather was cold, for fuel was unobtainable. They were hungry because, under Bolshevik rule, there was no allow-

ance of food for members of their hated class. They were in the dark, for they possessed only one candle-end, and were husbanding that against some time of crisis. They were frightened, for they heard the lorries of the Red soldiers rushing along the street outside, and every now and then a loud knocking at some door, by which they knew or guessed that some friend or acquaintance had been summoned forth, dragged away to suffer. The air was full of rumours of torture and death. And always there were rifle-shots to be heard, which meant to them what such sounds mean to frightened women.

There came a knocking, low and cautious, at their door. Tremblingly they admitted a friend, a nephew and cousin. He came with the news—or some rumour of some news, false or true—of a decision about the boundaries of the new Hungary just arrived at by one of the Peace Conferences. He mentioned the names of places: this town to go to the Czechs and that district to the Roumanians, and so on. With shaking hands the lady who told me this story took from its hiding-place her candle-end and lit it. She found a map of Hungary. Bending over it, the three of them drew a line and saw what the new, dismembered Hungary was to be. Then all three of them burst into tears. Their own cold and hunger and terror were forgotten in the contemplation of the overwhelming catastrophe of their country.

The recital of these and other woes went on and on, but finished at last. I rose to go. While I

was still standing, before I said good-bye, my hostess asked me if I could arrange to cash an English cheque for her.

"You know," she said, "I can only get about fifteen thousand crowns to the pound. You can get twenty thousand for me if you will."

I could—by breaking the law and incurring the risk of penalties, although in my case the penalties would certainly not be inflicted. The Government, acting through its *Devisen Centrale*, had decreed a rate of exchange which was not the real rate, was trying—vainly, of course—to maintain the value of the Hungarian crown. And this lady, whose passionate love for her country had moved her to tears while I talked to her, had almost made me cry while I listened, wanted to dodge that same country's laws—was willing, so far as her little cheque would do it, to injure that country's financial position—for the sake—her cheque was quite a small one—of making ten or fifteen thousand crowns (fifteen shillings or a pound).

I have not the slightest doubt about the reality of her patriotism. It was eager, passionate, tempestuous that night when she bent over the map of Hungary and scanned the lines of its humiliation by the light of her candle-end. She would have done anything, borne anything, then for the sake of Hungary. Five years later she would still have done anything heroic, would still have borne a good deal. But the grinding sordidness of poverty had blunted the fine edge of her patriotism. She was no longer hungry, as she had been in the

Bolshevik time, or cold, or forced to sit in darkness; but she had been obliged month after month to practise mean little economies in her struggle to live, had been compelled to bargain and chaffer over tiny differences in price, to consider the half-pennies and farthings which to well-to-do people matter little, to the indigent make all the difference. The possibility of so great a gain as the gain of a whole pound blinded her to the fact that the gain was to be made at the expense of her country—or at least, even if her country was wrong, by thwarting her country's policy.

That is how I fear that the spirit of Hungary may be broken. What neither the victories of her enemies nor their vengeance could accomplish, the slow cancer of poverty may achieve. "Nem, nem, sohar!" is still on every door, but the little metal plates which bear the words have grown dull now through want of polishing, and are sometimes so battered that the letters are scarcely legible. The maps which still hang on the walls are dusty. There are fewer postcards of fierce propaganda on sale. The "resurrection of Hungary" creed, which used to force itself on the eye on every tram-car, is on the tram-cars still, but a little faded, often tattered and torn. Corruption is eating its way into public life, which used to be singularly clean in Hungary. There are cases constantly reported in the papers of dishonesty among minor officials, and there are stories of dishonesty even among Ministers of State which no one finds very strange or at all difficult to believe. There is certainly less

fiery talk now than there was at first about Hungary's wrongs. Does all this indicate a weakening of spirit, a real breaking of heart of this once proud people? Or is it only that the first glitter has worn off while the metal beneath is as sound as ever?

It is on the answer to these questions that the future of Hungary seems to depend. A country which could support what Hungary has been through without losing heart is capable of anything, will certainly achieve a tolerable position for herself; but a country which only nurses a grievance and grumbles while turning from the path of high endeavour is beyond help and hope.

The friend of Hungary, looking at her life and spirit even two years ago, had little doubt or fear. He is not so sure or so sanguine to-day. There has been a lowering of the people's pride, a certain degradation of national life, a weakening of moral fibre. Yet no friend of Hungary will despair. The Magyars have been through worse times before —when they lay crushed and totally helpless under the Turkish domination, when the hand of the Austrian pressed most heavily upon them, when their patriot armies were crushed and their leaders driven into exile—yet the spirit of Hungary survived, and this indomitable people rose out of the dust. May it be so again!

CHAPTER XIX

A HUNGARIAN GENTLEMAN

CALVINIST and aristocrat, Count Stephen Tisza had in him the dour strength of his creed and the unbreakable pride of his class.

"It was to be." These, so we are told, were the words he spoke—the last of all the words he spoke—as he lay on the floor of his room, riddled by the bullets of the men who murdered him.

"Soon perhaps stones instead." Such was his judgment of the worth of popularity during the one hour in all his life when crowds cheered him and the people, mad with enthusiasm, flung bouquets into his carriage.

A man of rigid integrity, of honour which remained unstained until the end, of fidelity, of cool contempt for popularity and the advancement which popularity brings, Count Stephen Tisza was that thing which our world has almost ceased to admire—a gentleman. Asked for a definition of that title, a man who himself deserved it quoted the first few verses of the fifteenth Psalm. They might be written over Tisza's grave as his epitaph:

He that leadeth an uncorrupt life and doeth the thing which is right and speaketh the truth from his heart.

He that hath used no deceit in his tongue nor done evil to his neighbour and hath not slandered his neighbour.

He that sweareth to his neighbour and disappointeth him not though it were to his own hindrance.

He that hath not given his money upon usury nor taken reward against the innocent.

Whoso doeth these things shall never——

But Count Tisza did fall—otherwise the psalm, all but one verse of it, might be taken as a description of him.

Count Tisza was not afraid to be alone. He was, as few men and very few modern rulers are, totally indifferent to the judgment of the crowd—so totally indifferent that he would not condescend to explain himself, even when explanation might have saved him. He was a man of few friends, of almost no intimates. It was perhaps his creed which gave him this singular kind of strength. In the mind of the Calvinist, the thought of the one body with many interdependent members is obscured by the sublime conception of the human soul alone with God. A man whose life is dominated by this conception will not be afraid of being misunderstood or hated. He will not greatly crave for or care to seek the support of love or friendship. It will be enough for him to feel in his own heart that he is right.

Count Stephen Tisza followed his father, Coloman Tisza, as Prime Minister of Hungary before the war. He held that office during the war up to the time of the death of the Emperor Francis Joseph; then he was dismissed. Some greatness is required

in a King who has great Ministers, and the Emperor Karl, amiable and unfortunate, was not a big enough man to be served by so big a man as Stephen Tisza.

The Tisza family belongs to that class of gentry which in Hungary is sharply divided from the great nobility (the Magnates), on the one hand, and on the other from the bourgeois class. They do not correspond exactly to anything which exists in England to-day, but I fancy that the Tory squires of the middle part of the eighteenth century were men of similar character and held a somewhat similar position. On the one side of them were the Hanoverian monarch and the great Whig ruling families; on the other side was a commercial middle class struggling into power and position. Like these half-Jacobite squires, the Hungarian gentry were professedly the adherents of a cause which they had too much sense to support in practice. The English squire—Waverley of Waverley Honour—might drink toasts to the King by divine right, but after a couple of efforts learned the folly of fighting for him. The Hungarian gentlemen were nationalist, all for independence, haters of Austrian rule; but they understood well enough that without Austria to lean on they could not hold their own against the insurgent nationalities, who outnumbered—or almost outnumbered—the Magyars in their own land. Members of the Tisza family fought with Kossuth in the War of Independence. They learned their lesson. Count Coloman and Count Stephen were the Ministers trusted,

and in the case of Stephen beloved, of the Emperor Francis Joseph.

Even more completely than the eighteenth-century English squires the Hungarians were masters of their own estates. They retained longer than any other land-owning aristocracy in Europe power that was nearly absolute over their acres and all who lived upon them. They "dwelt among their own people," mixing little in the life of Budapest, scarcely ever going to the Court of Vienna. To literature and art they were almost indifferent, and were too proud to pay lip service. For the ways of cities and Courts they had a profound dislike. They were—again a point of resemblance with the English squire—lovers of sport of every kind, men who lived much in the open air, who rejoiced in physical exertion, good horsemen, good swordsmen, good shots.

It was from this class that Count Stephen Tisza came, and the home of his family was in the eastward part of Hungary, very near the borders of Transylvania, where the Calvinist creed always had a strong hold, especially among the gentry. Religious passions have never been fierce in Hungary. Catholics and Calvinists have always been able, and to-day are able, to live on terms of mutual forbearance and respect. It is a common boast in Hungary that there is no country in Europe where religious tolerance is so complete, where his religious profession makes so little difference to a man's position and prospects. It is a perfectly justifiable boast, so far as the mutual tolerance of Christians

is concerned. Hungary in the past was faced with a non-Christian enemy, the Turk, and feels to-day that another non-Christian, the Jew, is the great danger of national life. Naturally enough, Christians of any kind are drawn together more than they are elsewhere.

In other countries the line of religious division has corresponded with some other line of partition—racial, social, political. In Hungary the Magyar race contains Catholics and Protestants in the proportion of two-thirds to one-third. Religious differences cut across the line of social distinction. A man in any position may be found belonging to either creed, and it has never been possible in politics to establish a Catholic or a Protestant party. But perhaps the deepest-lying cause of the prevalent tolerance is the fact that the Hungarians are not a very religious people. Men do not quarrel seriously unless they feel deeply. Hungarians do not quarrel about creeds because very few of them feel strongly about any creed.

But all this is not to say that creed in Hungary, as elsewhere, has no effect on character. The stern, cold Calvinism of many of the great Transylvanian families has bred a kind of character of which Count Stephen Tisza is a fine example.

As Prime Minister in the years before the war, Tisza had a difficult part to play. There were burning questions—the recognition of the Jews, the marriage laws, and the suffrage—which roused political passions to a high pitch. There was the never settled question of national rights. The

extreme nationalists were by no means satisfied with the Ausgleich which Déak's policy obtained. Their aspirations for a complete recognition of their independence came to a head in the demand that the Hungarian Army should be Hungarian, not Austrian. Year after year one aspect or another of this question was debated with a heat which led to serious disturbances, both in Parliament and outside. By temperament and in sentiment Count Stephen was in full sympathy with the full national demand. As a statesman he recognized the danger of anything like a break with Vienna. He never had a strong party behind him, and could rarely reckon with certainty on the support of any powerful individual, yet he succeeded in dominating the assembly and guiding the country through a difficult time. He was not loved; he was not even greatly liked. He was respected.

Then came, in 1914, the murder at Sarajevo of the heir of the Austrian throne and the summoning of that Council in Vienna which sent the impossible ultimatum to Serbia and rendered the war inevitable.

M. Take Jonescu, in a volume of clever appreciations of the statesmen of the time, takes the view that Count Tisza was responsible—more responsible than any other of the Emperor's advisers—for the fatal step, and his opinion was widely held. It was believed everywhere that the blame for the Austrian intransigeance—the intransigeance which made war inevitable—rested on the shoulders of Count Tisza. We now know how entirely wrong this popular opinion was.

The publication of the copious minutes of the faithful Conference show us Count Tisza as an opponent—the solitary opponent—of the policy adopted by Austria. He struggled tenaciously, by every means in his power, up to the very last moment, to prevent the sending of the ultimatum. He was outvoted and overborne.

The Austrian policy was plainly set out by Berchtold. Serbia, the centre of the dreaded Pan-Slav movement, was a perpetual irritation, even a danger, to the Austrian Empire. So long as Serbia survived the lately acquired provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina were no safe possession. Croatia was and would continue to be the home of dangerous intrigue. The subject nationalities in Hungary would be encouraged to be troublesome. The opportunity for crushing Serbia once for all had arrived. Germany had promised support in the case of Russian intervention. Roumania, if doubtful, would be neutralized by the fear of Bulgaria, which was thirsting for revenge after the humiliation of the last Balkan War. It seemed that victory was certain and a long peace secure if only Serbia could be forced to fight. It was in Austria's power to force her.

Against such reasoning what arguments had Count Tisza to oppose ?

It is characteristic of the man that he raised a point of honour. He objected to the launching of an attack upon Serbia without proper warning. But such a consideration was not likely to weigh much in any Imperial Conference. Honour is for

window-dressing. *Real Politik*—the German spirit had penetrated far—demanded that action should follow the logic of fact. Count Tisza shifted his ground. He urged that the contemplated rush at Serbia would place Austria in the wrong in the eyes of Europe. It was worth while to have the favourable judgment of the outside world, if possible. It was dangerous to outrage the conscience of civilization. The argument was useless. With the might of Germany behind them the Emperor's councillors felt they might safely treat the conscience of Europe with contempt. Count Tisza had still one argument left. The destruction of Serbia necessarily involved the incorporation of a large mass of Slav people into the Austrian Empire. Count Tisza knew better than anyone else the danger of doing that. His years of struggle against the insurgent Hungarian Slavs had taught him the impossibility of ruling any larger numbers of this alien race. In the annihilation of Serbia he saw the end of Magyar Hungary. And Count Tisza was a Hungarian first, an Austrian and an Imperialist a long way after.

It is in this intense narrow patriotism of his that we find the true reason for his opposition to the war. Perhaps he had, or perhaps no more than any of the others he had, doubts about the final issue of the war, but however it ended, in victory or defeat, it must end to the disadvantage of Hungary. Others stood to gain or lose—certainly, they thought, to gain. Hungary stood only to lose even by victory. Count Tisza saw that; but he

was alone. The Hungarians were eager for the war, sure of victory, unable to see beyond victory, quite unable to visualize defeat. We are told that when Count Tisza returned to Budapest, after being outvoted and beaten in the Council, he went straight to his club, where a small party of his political friends awaited him, men who had been urging a war policy on him.

"Gentlemen," he said, "you have got your wish and destroyed your country."

If he ever spoke the words at all, he spoke them to a few friends in a privileged place. To the public he said nothing about his opposition to the war. He endured in silence the wild cheering of the crowd, who wanted war and believed that he had counselled it. When they flung flowers into his carriage he estimated justly enough the value of his popularity: "Soon perhaps stones instead."

Beaten in the Council Chamber, Count Tisza made one more effort to avert the war, advising milder treatment of Serbia. He wrote a long letter to the Emperor, who was then at Ischl. He urged the arguments that he had used at the Council. He indicated what he believed would be the consequences of the more moderate course which he himself recommended:

"We ought to allow Serbia the chance of avoiding war, though she must pay the price of a severe diplomatic humiliation. We must show the whole world that if we are to fight it will be a war of defence. My advice is to address a note to Belgrade, moderate and not pressing in tone, and in

it give clear expression of our grievances. If the reply is not satisfactory, or if Serbia attempts evasion, then we must reply with an ultimatum and engage in hostilities. But in that case we should be engaged in a war forced on us—one of those wars which a nation must wage without slackening, to the very end, if she is to continue to be a nation; a war the responsibility for which would rest on our enemies. They would have refused to behave honourably, even after the tragedy of Sarajevo. If we act thus we should strengthen the German action in Bucarest, and perhaps Russia will abstain from taking part in the conflict. In all probability England will exercise a pacificatory influence on the other members of the Entente. No doubt also the Tzar will see, on reflection, that it does not befit him to take up arms on behalf of anarchists and regicides."

In order to avoid complications in Italy, to win the sympathy of England, and if possible to secure the neutrality of Russia, he wished the Emperor to declare at once that, even in the event of war, Austria had no intention of destroying or annexing Serbia. The fruits of victory—of victory in the kind of war he proposed Tisza had no doubt—were to go to Greece and Albania. Austria ought to seek nothing but trifling rectification of frontier.

Such was the advice which Count Tisza offered to his master.

"When I think," he went on, "of the economic destruction, of the sufferings and sacrifices inevitable in such a war, I cannot bear to have any part

in the responsibility for the proposed attack on Serbia."

The advice was rejected; the warning was disregarded. A letter, written almost at the same time, by the Emperor William of Germany had more influence with Francis Joseph than anything that Count Tisza could say or write.

What courses were open to Count Tisza then?

He might have resigned his position as Prime Minister of Hungary and proclaimed to the world his disagreement with the Austrian policy. He might have tried to prevent his country being dragged into the war. At first he would not have succeeded in this, but before the end the Hungarians might have been, under his leadership, what the Czechs were, a source of weakness rather than strength. To a man like Count Tisza no such actions were possible. Honour forbade them and that feeling which the English of all men ought to understand most easily, that it is a disgraceful thing to go back on one's own side. And there was besides—a very curious thing when we realize what the two men were—a bond of personal affection between the Emperor and his Minister. Francis Joseph—ultra-Catholic, Absolutist, Imperialist, in a word Habsburg—loved and trusted the Magyar Calvinist. Count Tisza—Nationalist, anti-Austrian, Protestant—was entirely loyal to the Emperor. There was only one course of action open to a man such as he was, and he took it.

He preserved silence about his own opinions and the advice he had offered. He allowed it to be

supposed that he had counselled the very thing he feared. He accepted even the popularity—the very brief popularity—which came to him through a mistake which he would not rectify. He set himself to the task of concentrating the whole energies of Hungary on winning the war.

We shall never know what Count Tisza's feelings were when, worse than the worst he foresaw, England entered the war against the Central Powers. He was a lover of England, and even during the war never allowed any feeling of hostility to England to gain ground in Hungary. No "Hymn of Hate" was ever sung in Budapest. The English who remained there were treated with extraordinary kindness and forbearance. I have talked to many who were in Hungary during the whole of the war, and their testimony is unanimous. The Hungarians, and Count Tisza chiefly, resolutely refused to say or think that they were at war with England. One interesting bit of evidence of Count Tisza's own feeling came to my notice. There was in Budapest before the war a kind of home for English ladies, many of them quite young, who were teaching their own language there. The Hungarian upper classes have always wished, and still wish, to have their children taught English. There were, and are, many Englishwomen living in Budapest earning their living in this way. Shortly after the outbreak of war Count Tisza sent for the lady who was at the head of this governess' home. He told her that it was his wish that no Englishwoman should be insulted or molested in Hungary, and asked to

have any instances of ill-treatment reported to him at once. He urged that all Englishwomen, especially the younger, should be sent back to England as soon as possible. He promised to facilitate their journey as far as the Swiss frontier by every means in his power. That promise he kept.

It is likely that a man of Count Tisza's ability and foresight recognized in England's intervention the decisive factor which would sooner or later turn the scales against the Germanic powers. But he never for an instant faltered or weakened in his effort to secure victory. All his energies and powers were given to rendering Hungary's aid to her allies as effective as possible. But he never ceased to be Hungarian first. At a critical period of the war, when Roumania put herself up to auction, Germany wanted to bid, as apparently England and France did, Transylvania as the price of her support. Count Tisza met the approaches of the German Emperor with the blunt assertion that he stood for the integrity of Hungarian territory, and that if sacrifices had to be made Germany might make them herself. Later on, though this time not successfully, he opposed the German policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. He foresaw the entry of the United States into the war if the policy should be adopted. He refused to be deceived, as others were, by the assertion that England would be starved out before American intervention could be effective.

A man so clear-sighted and so determined was not likely to be loved either in Vienna or in Berlin.

The death of the old Emperor saw the end of Count Tisza's power. The new Emperor Karl, confusedly seeking a way of peace, half hoping to disarm hostility by belated concessions to democracy, wanted no such man as Count Tisza at his elbow. There were intrigues, misunderstandings, wranglings, and then the abrupt dismissal of the Hungarian Minister.

Count Tisza gave up the reins of power, as we may easily believe, without great regret. He joined his regiment, the Debreczen Huzzars, as colonel. In the Carpathians he led his men and suffered as they did, taking his full share of risks and hardships. To such a man the escape from the tangles of politics must have been a supreme relief. He was no longer responsible for the conduct of complex negotiations of doubtful morality, no longer torn between his sense of patriotism and his duty to his side. The duty of a soldier is at least plain, and Count Tisza was not likely to reckon its hardships intolerable or its dangers very terrible.

Once more, and only once more, he appeared in his old place in Parliament. In October 1918 it was evident that the end had come. Allenby's victory in Palestine, the breaking of the Bulgarian front, the utter collapse of the Austrian military power, made it plain to the blindest that defeat was inevitable.

"We have lost the war," said Count Tisza in his last speech.

How easy to have added, "We ought never to have fought it." How few men could have refrained

from saying, "I counselled against it." But he was too proud for self-defence. Out of loyalty to the Emperor he was silent when they cheered him for having made the war. Out of loyalty to his own self-respect he was silent afterwards when they hooted him for the very thing which once they cheered. He had something to say, though no one listened, about the courage and chivalry of the Hungarian soldiers. It was well-deserved praise, and justly spoken. The Hungarians were the best fighters in the Austrian Army and the cleanest fighters in all the Germanic Alliance. But the very men he praised were the bitterest in their hate of him. Disbanded soldiers—broken, disheartened, disillusioned—were flocking back into Budapest, and every one of them had a curse for Count Tisza, the man who had dragged them into the miserable war. They had clamoured for it. He had striven to avert it. Now they were beaten, and they cursed him.

The end—the very end—was not far off.

Count Károlyi, who held the office of Prime Minister, went to seek terms of peace from General Franchet D'Espérey. He set forth full of hope, leaving behind him a Hungary which did not dream of being any less than what Hungary had been before the war. He was received by the Frenchman with chill contempt. Never was there a ruder wakening to reality. Never was a sermon preached on the text *Væ victis!* with more dramatic abruptness. He came back to Budapest with few illusions left, and the Hungarian people awakened at last to what it meant to be beaten.

Amid the general despair and helplessness one thing still seemed desirable and still possible—vengeance on the man who was supposed to have brought the nation to such a pass. How far Karolyi and his National Council were actually responsible for the murder of Count Stephen Tisza it is impossible to say. It is difficult to believe that they did not wish it, and, wishing it, work for it, however indirectly.

Count Tisza was warned. A friend wrote to him; his niece spoke to him; his wife begged him to fly from Budapest or to take refuge in the house of some friend where he might be safe. Count Tisza refused.

"I have never been a shirker," he said. "I shall not fly now."

There spoke the gentleman.

"What is to be was settled long ago," he said.

That was the voice of the Calvinist.

He stayed in his own house, occupied himself in arranging some papers and destroying others, characteristically destroying the evidence of his own freedom from war guilt, the minutes of the Council Meeting in Vienna, and the copy of his letter to the Emperor. Even to the very end loyalty triumphed over the desire for self-justification and pride forbade what might have looked like an apology.

"Enter three murderers." We laugh at the *naïveté* of the Elizabeth stage directions, but in life the naïvest things often correspond exactly with fact. Into Count Tisza's house, at five in the after-

noon of a gloomy autumn day, there entered three murderers. The servant who admitted them knew what they were, for he came to his master to announce their presence with tears in his eyes. The two ladies who were with Count Tisza knew, for they followed him into the room where the murderers waited. Count Tisza knew, for he took his revolver with him.

There were other murderers lurking round corners and outside doors—a sorry crowd, hired for wages, in whose praise there is only this to be said: they demanded more for their services than Judas did for his. Among them were a few deserters from the army, a renegade officer, and a couple of Jews, one of them a journalist—the first flowers of the summer of Bolshevism which was just about to begin.

"What do you want, gentlemen?" asked Count Tisza.

It cannot have been a pleasant job answering such a question, especially when the questioner was Count Stephen Tisza with a revolver in his hand. Men have sometimes made things easy for their murderers by collapsing through cowardice, but this was not the kind of man who collapses. Duelling is still a recognized institution in Hungarian society, and Count Tisza had the reputation of never failing to accept a challenge and rarely failing to get the better of his opponent. The Jewish journalist is not likely to have faced the situation untroubled. Perhaps the deserters did better. At all events, someone answered and accused Count Tisza of having caused the war.

Did his wife know the truth? Did Countess Denise Almassy, his niece, know? Or was the secret safe, for the time, with the burnt papers? Neither of the ladies said anything. Count Tisza answered briefly, without explanation, that his accusers were wrong.

Then—the Jewish journalist this time, we suspect, and no doubt suavely:

"We cannot argue with a man who has a revolver in his hands."

Count Tisza laid his revolver down on a table in front of him and stepped back. He understood, of course. Why did he part with his chance of at least selling his life dearly? Was it his Calvinistic fatalism which prompted him, a conviction of the futility of struggling against that which was ordained? Was it the pride of a gentleman who prefers to die without soiling his hands with the blood of such *canaille*? Was it that this strong man was weary at last, and amid the ruin of the land he loved and served so long desired nothing better than to die, and as quickly as possible?

The shots were fired. Count Tisza fell. His wife, bending over him, heard the last words he spoke:

"It was to be."

They laid the body on a couch, dead. But his enemies found it difficult to believe that he was really dead. They sent two messengers to find out. One, duly authorized, from the Ministry of War, another, less respectably accredited, from the Communistic Council of Soldiers. It would have been awkward—very awkward—for Count Károlyi

and for the Bolshevik soldiers if Count Stephen Tisza had managed to survive. A Jewish journalist is not the most reliable person in the world in an affair of the sort, and deserters are not always very brave men. It was well to make sure. But Count Tisza was dead—really, unquestionably dead. So Count Károlyi sent a wreath, in token of his high regard for his old adversary, which wreath the Countess Tisza threw on a dung-heap, having some reason to believe that the man who sent it had plotted her husband's death.

So died, after living greatly, Count Stephen Tisza, a Hungarian gentleman.

We are tempted to speculate on the "ifs" suggested by such a story. If the Emperor Francis Joseph had believed in Count Tisza a little more than he believed in Berchtold, Sturgkh and the other three members of that fateful Council—if the Emperor had sent Count Tisza's reasonable note to Belgrade—would things have then worked out as Count Tisza prophesied—a short and easy little war conducted under the eyes of a neutral Europe, an unimportant readjustment of certain frontiers in the Balkans? Or was the Great War utterly inevitable and the threat to Serbia only the accidental occasion of what was caused by greater things? Must we say about the war, as Count Tisza said of the assassin's bullets, "It was to be"?

If the Emperor Karl had kept Count Tisza by his side and had the counsel of the wisest statesman n his Empire when he made his pathetic little efforts for an earlier peace, would he have been

able to save Austria and spare Europe the horrors of the last, worst year? Would Hungary have secured less disastrous terms? The Emperor Karl was overborne by Germany, was not strong enough to hold his own against his great Allies. But Count Tisza was strong. His answer stopped the Germans from offering Transylvania to the Roumanians. His forceful arguments against the fatal submarine campaign so dominated even German generals that they felt forced to refer back the decision to their Emperor. Could he, and if so would he, have stiffened the will of the young Emperor and secured a separate peace?

Of all possible speculations none are more futile than these, but none more fascinating. Perhaps only those who accept Count Tisza's creed can avoid them. They find a sufficient reason for not speculating in his conviction that "it was to be."

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